

B. A. H.

A
DEFENCE
OF
UNITARIANISM,
INTENDED
AS AN ANSWER
TO
Dr. HAWKER'S Sermons,
ON THE
DIVINITY OF CHRIST,
BY
THOMAS PORTER.

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PLYMOUTH;
PRINTED AND SOLD BY B. HAYDON;
SOLD ALSO BY
J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

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THE
P R E F A C E.

THE reason which induced the author to compose the following sheets, and now to offer them to the public, was a desire to contribute, in some little degree, towards the recovery of what he apprehends to be a very important truth, which has been long lost to the world, but seems now to be gradually reviving, THE UNITY OF THE DIVINE NATURE.

Professing to have no wish for the spread of his own opinion, any farther than that he judges it to be agreeable to the declarations of the holy scriptures, he was truly rejoiced when Dr.* Hawker's sermons made their appearance, because it was probable they would be the means of calling the attention of many persons in this part of the world to the subject, who, otherwise, might never have bestowed upon it a serious thought; and he is persuaded that the discussion of
every

* Since the following sheets were composed, and sent to the press, Mr. Hawker has received the degree of Doctor of divinity, from the University of Edinburgh,

every question, on which ever side the truth may lie, must always prove subservient to its success.

He was, however, not a little surprised, on perusing the sermons, to find that Dr. Hawker had brought forward his proofs from scripture, as though they had never been replied to; and that he had hardly noticed a single argument which has been urged by Unitarians in favour of the contrary doctrine. This he trusts will serve as his apology for having offered upon the subject little or nothing which is new; for till old interpretations are set aside, and old arguments are refuted, it is not to be expected that recourse will be had to new ones.

It was also a matter of wonder to him, that Dr. Hawker should have pronounced, so decidedly as he has done,* on the merits of the controversy between Dr. Horsley and Dr. Priestley, when it appears to be evident that he has not read the works of Dr. Priestley. For he observes, page 26, note, that
“ when

* See his Sermons, p. 17, note,

“when the apostle John said, Christ is come in the flesh, I John iv. 2, Dr. Priestley takes the liberty to make this very material alteration, and says, that the apostle meant to say, Christ is come *of* the flesh.” The fact however is, that Dr. Priestley has said no such thing. In the passage to which Dr. Hawker alludes,† the word *of* is substituted instead of *in*, without any comment; and if we may believe Dr. Priestley, it was on his part quite unintentional. Dr. Horsley, indeed, has charged him with having altered the expression with a view to the improvement of his argument, to which Dr. Priestley makes the following reply, with which if Dr. Hawker had been acquainted, he would not have misrepresented him in the manner he has done. “I am sorry, Sir, that my printer, or my own mistake, should have given you all this trouble. I do assure you, I had no knowledge of having made a change in a single word in copying that text, nor should I have wished to have made any change at all in it; thinking that, as it now stands,

† Dr. Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity,
Vol. i. p. 10.

stands, it is quite as much for my purpose as that which you suppose I have purposely substituted in its place."* Surely no person can be qualified to pass a judgment upon any controverted point, when he has read only the arguments on one side of the question.

And here the author cannot help observing that, though he is perfectly willing to rest the decision of the controversy solely on the testimony of scripture, being firmly persuaded that its uniform declarations can be explained only on unitarian principles, he is not of opinion with Dr. Hawker that the sentiments of the early christians make nothing either for or against the point in question. If it can be proved that they did not believe the doctrine of our Lord's deity, it could be only because there was nothing in the accounts which they received from the apostles to lead them to such a belief. And of these accounts they surely must be allowed to have been the best judges; having received them before there was a possibility of their being corrupted, and being much better

* Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horsley, p. 11, 12.

ter acquainted with their phraseology than any christians now can be.

That Dr. Hawker, in the publication of his sermons, was influenced by the most upright motives, not a doubt can be entertained; and his zeal in what he apprehends to be so good and important a cause, is certainly very commendable. It is also a pleasing circumstance, that upon the whole he has discovered so much liberality of mind, not connecting, as is too often the case, the favour of God with a belief only in his own opinion, but expressing his hope that the unintentional error of every humble and sincere mind will be pardoned.

While the ignorant, the indolent, and the interested, may despise, or affect to despise controversies of this nature, and represent them as too trifling to deserve the attention of mankind, to every real well-wisher to the christian cause, they will appear in a very interesting light. If Jesus Christ be God Most High, he ought to be acknowledged and adored as such; if not, we ought to tremble
at

at the idea of ascribing those attributes and works, and that worship to another, which is due to God only; who is jealous of his honour, and who has declared that he will not give his glory to another.

It was this conviction of the importance of the question which, no doubt, induced Dr. Hawker to publish his sermons, and which now induces the author to animadvert upon them. He hopes that the same conviction will influence their respective readers to examine the subject with that seriousness and impartiality which its importance demands. Whatever effect may be produced upon their minds by the present publication, he will be able to console himself with the rectitude of his intentions, and with the persuasion, even should he be mistaken, that, in these enlightened times, it is impossible for the cause of truth to suffer from any well meant attempts which are made to promote it.

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ERRATA.

Page 19. l. 8. and in some other places, *for* synonymous,
read synonymous.

49. 6. *for* a mortal man *read* mortal men.

51. 15. *for* allowing, *read* allow.

69. note, l. 15, *read*, *observes upon a similar occasion.*

75 8. blot out, *The divine immutability therefore
may still remain unimpeached; and read
only, The identity of person therefore may
still be preserved, &c.*

144 17. *for* are we not, *read* we are not.

191 15. *for* condusive, *read* conducive.

A
DEFENCE
OF
UNITARIANISM.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Holy Scriptures considered as a Rule of Faith.

I Am equally willing with Mr. Hawker, that the doctrine, for which he contends, shall be decided by the scriptures. And it is with pleasure I take the opportunity of making this declaration; since, in general, the Unitarians are represented as thinking lightly of the scriptures, and as rejecting the doctrines of revelation, merely because they are, in some respects, above their comprehension. But these representations are false. We admit, on the contrary, that the scriptures are competent to determine upon every point of religious controversy, and are willing to submit to their decision.

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But when I say that, with respect to the doctrines of christianity, we are willing to abide by the declarations of the scriptures, it is necessary I should explain my meaning. With Mr. Hawker and other Trinitarians we acknowledge the authenticity of the books of the Old and New Testament; but we do not suppose, that our english translation of them is free from errors. It is allowed by all parties, that they were translated by men equally fallible with ourselves. It is a natural supposition, therefore, that they have not always given us their true meaning; but that in some instances they may have been misled by ignorance, and in others by prejudice. This we are persuaded is the case, because many errors, which, in their circumstances, it was impossible for them to avoid, have since been discovered.

Neither do we suppose, that the Greek, from which our translation of the books of the New Testament is taken, is an exact copy of them, as they were at first written by the evangelists and apostles. These books were composed long before the art of printing was known, and the original copies are now lost. In transcribing these copies, many mistakes might be made. Some letters and words might be left out, and others might be misplaced; in consequence of which, particular passages might be made to convey a meaning different
from

from what was intended by the original writers. That this was sometimes the case, is evident from the variations we find in the different copies, and, indeed, it is acknowledged by Trinitarians as well as ourselves, however much we may differ in our opinions with regard to some particular texts. In order, therefore, to satisfy ourselves respecting the authenticity of any passage, we have recourse to the following rule; we compare the copies with each other, and then consider the connection; and judge from the preponderance of evidence.

But here, perhaps, it will be objected, that the common people have neither time nor opportunity for such researches. It is, however, easy to furnish a satisfactory reply. When it is their wish to satisfy themselves respecting the truth of a particular doctrine, let them consult the general tenor of the scriptures; and if this should be found to be in favour of the doctrine, and there should be a few passages only which make against it; in order to reconcile these passages with the general tenor, let them study the connection. Should difficulties still remain, they must carefully examine on which side the preponderance of evidence lies, and make the opinion, which is attended with the less degree of evidence, submit to that which is attended with the greater, and they will not be far from the truth.

I proceed to observe, that we do not, in all cases, profess to understand the scriptures in a literal, but sometimes in a figurative sense. Were we always to understand them in their literal sense, we must, with the Papists, believe the doctrine of transubstantiation: for Christ, we are informed, "took bread, and brake it, and said, *Take, eat: this is my body.*" But this is a doctrine which Trinitarians, as well as ourselves, reject with abhorrence. And what are our reasons for rejecting it? Because it is a doctrine in itself absurd, and not countenanced by other passages of scripture. We say, therefore, that our Saviour, in this instance, is not to be understood literally, but figuratively. And why may not this be the case in other instances? Unitarians are of opinion that it is. But in all the instances they produce, they are willing, as in the case of transubstantiation, that the connection and the tenor of scripture shall determine it.

Again; though we admit the authenticity of the books of the Old and New Testament, we do not hold ourselves obliged to believe every private opinion of the different writers, but those doctrines only which they were commissioned by God himself to reveal to the world. It was evidently the opinion of the person who wrote the book of Joshua, that the sun went round the earth; but it has since been demonstrated to be false, and has long been discarded.

discarded. It was also the opinion of the evangelists, that the lunatics, of whom they give us an account in their histories, were possessed by demons; and this was the prevailing notion of the times. There are, however, few thinking persons now, who do not consider these possessions as a species of insanity.

I have made this remark in consequence of the representation Mr. Hawker has given of Dr. Priestley, (a) and which there was no necessity for him to have given. For neither Dr. Priestley, nor any other Unitarian of whom I know any thing, ever thought it to be an opinion of the apostles, that Christ made the world. He only says, "As it is not pretended, that there are miracles particularly adapted to prove, that Christ made and supports the world, I do not see, that we are under any obligation to believe it, merely because it was an opinion held by an apostle." (b) By which he means, that had it been a mere private opinion of an apostle, which he was not commissioned by our Saviour to make known, and which he wrought no miracle to confirm, he should not consider himself as bound to believe it. Had Christ himself declared, that he was the maker of the world, or had the

(a) Page 7. note.

(b) History of early Opinions concerning Christ. vol. i. p. 63.

the apostles ever declared it, as coming from the lips of Christ, Dr. Priestley would have been as ready to have believed it as Mr. Hawker. But such an idea does not appear to us ever to have entered their minds.

Lastly, I observe, that though we allow the different writers of the New Testament to have written the books attributed to them, we are not of opinion, that they were under a plenary inspiration at the time they wrote them. It does not appear to us, that there was any necessity for it, as it was an easy matter for them, without such supernatural aid, to give a true relation of the things they had seen and heard. And, indeed, a critical examination of the four gospels seems to afford positive proof that they were not. For, though they agree in their general statement of facts, there are certain little circumstances in the account of which they disagree, (c) and which, on the supposition they were under a plenary inspiration at the time they wrote, cannot be accounted for. So far, however, are these differences, in our opinion, from weakening, that they considerably strengthen,
our

(c) Matthew mentions *two* demoniacs as having met our Saviour when he went into the country of the Gergesenes: Mark and Luke mention only *one*. Compare Matt. viii 28

our belief in christianity. They convince us, that the evangelists were not combined together to impose a cheat upon the world, but that they wrote their respective histories, according to the best of their recollection, without consulting one another.

I conclude this chapter by assuring my reader, that though I have thus freely expressed myself on the subject of inspiration, I am nevertheless persuaded, that the evangelists and apostles were honest men, that the facts they have related are true, and that they have taught no doctrines *authoritatively*, which they were not commissioned to teach by their blessed master. With respect to the point in dispute between Mr. Hawker and myself, and every important doctrine of christianity, I am willing to abide by their testimony.

—34, with Mark v. 1.—20, and Luke viii. 26—40. Matthew and Mark inform us, that the transfiguration of Christ took place *fix* days after his declaration to the disciples, that *some of them should not taste of death, till they had seen the son of man coming in his kingdom*: Luke informs us, it was about *eight* days after it. Compare Matt. xvii. 1. and Mark ix. 1. 2, with Luke ix. 27—28. Matthew speaks of *both* the thieves that were crucified with Jesus as reviling him: Luke informs us, it was only *one* of them. Compare Matt. xxvii. 44, with Luke xxiii. 39—44. Matthew and Mark speak only of *one* angel who appeared to Mary Magdalene on the morning of our Lord's resurrection: Luke and John relate that there were *two*. Compare Matt. xxviii. 2, and Mark xvi. 5, with Luke xxiv. 4. and John xx. 12.

CHAPTER II.

The general Tenor of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, in favour of the Doctrine of the Divine Unity.

HAVING observed, in the preceding chapter, that the general tenor of the Scriptures would greatly assist us in determining the truth, or falsehood, of any particular doctrine, I shall now, before I notice Mr. Hawker's arguments, attempt to prove, that the general tenor of the Old and New Testament is in favour of the doctrine of the divine unity.

The first principle of the law, as taught the Jews by Moses, was, *Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD.* Accordingly we find, that this important truth is frequently asserted in all their writings. Some of the most remarkable passages are the following. Ex. xx. 3. *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.* Deut. iv. 35. *The LORD he is God, there is none else besides him.* II. Sam. vii. 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee.* II. Kings, xix. 15. *O LORD God of Israel,—thou art the God, even thou alone.* I Chron. xvii. 20.

xvii. 20. *O LORD, there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee.* Isai. xliv. 6. *I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God.* v. 8. *Is there a God besides me? Yea, there is no God, I know not any.*

The general tenor of the Old Testament is agreeable to the above quoted passages; a certain proof that no other being, or person, is God besides Jehovah. This will perhaps more fully appear from the following considerations.

1. The passages, in the most express terms, exclude any one else from being God.

2. The pronouns used, with respect to this one God, are all singular, (*d*) *I, thou, he, me, thee, him;*

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(*d*) Perhaps it will be here objected, that the plural pronoun is used Gen. i. 26, *Let us make man in our own image,* and in some other places. To this it may be answered, that it is not uncommon for single persons to speak in the plural number. It was the custom not only in the eastern nations; but every one knows it to be so in our own. I will content myself with producing the following instances from the scriptures. Cant. I. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Daniel says, Dan. II. 36, *This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the King.* Jesus says to Nicodemus, John iii. 11, *Verily, verily I say unto thee, we speak that we do know.*

a circumstance which not only proves that no other being is Jehovah, but that Jehovah is one person.

8. There is not a single text to be found in the Old Testament, which favours the doctrine of a plurality of persons in the divine essence; the consequence of which is, that the Jews always have been, and still continue to be, strenuous advocates for the divine unity.

I shall now produce some passages from the New Testament, which is equally clear and explicit with the Old.

Jesus Christ himself confirms the doctrine of the divine unity as taught before him by Moses, Mark xii. 29. *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD.* Matt. xix. 17. *And he (Jesus) said unto him, why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.* John xvii. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; or, as it might be rendered, "know thee to be the only true God, and Jesus to be the Christ whom thou hast sent."*

The apostles, instructed by our Lord, teach the same truth. I. Cor. viii. 4. 5. 6. *We know—that there*

there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven, or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many) But to us there is but one God. Gal. iii. 20. But God is one. Eph. iv. 6. One God and Father of all. I. Tim. i. 17. The only wise God. I. Tim. ii. 5. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. James ii. 19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well. Jude v. 4. The only LORD God.--Surely, if there be any meaning in words, these passages, which are but a few out of the many that might be produced, prove God to be numerically one.

The New Testament has sufficiently informed us, who this *one* God is; for it teaches us expressly that the great Being, who is called the FATHER, is the *only* true God. The apostle Paul says, I. Cor. viii. 6, *There is but one God, the FATHER; I. Cor. xv. 24, When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the FATHER; Gal. i. 1, Paul an apostle—by Jesus Christ, and by God the FATHER. Eph. i. 17, he uses these remarkable words, That the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ, the FATHER of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom. Speaking of our duty to God, Eph. v. 20, he uses these words, which deserve particular attention, because, in them, the great and only object of religious worship is clearly*

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pointed out to us; *Giving thanks always for all things to God, even the FATHER, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* St. James uses the same stile, James iii. 9, *Therewith bleſs we God, even the FATHER;* and Peter, II Pet. i. 17, *For he (Jesus) received from God the FATHER honour and glory;* St. John also in his second epistle, v. 3, *Grace be with you, mercy, and peace from God the FATHER;* and Jude likewise, v. 1, *Jude—to them that are ſanctified by God the FATHER.* It is ſtill more remarkable, that Chriſt himſelf uſes the words GOD and FATHER as ſynonymous. John xx. 17. *I aſcend unto my FATHER and your FATHER, to my GOD and your GOD.*

From theſe paſſages we may infer,

1. That our ſaviour himſelf, and all his apoſtles, have adopted an uniform ſtile in ſpeaking of God. They uniformly call him God the FATHER.

2. It is evident, that the apoſtles who wrote, and the perſons to whom they wrote, were well acquainted with this form of words, as being the familiar and ordinary terms which were uſed in the apoſtolic age.

3. It deſerves our particular notice, that
ſuch

such forms of speaking, as *God the Son*, *God the Holy Ghost*, are never used by any of the sacred writers, in any part of the New Testament.

From the whole we may conclude, that the general tenor of the Old and New Testament teaches us, in the most positive terms, that there is but *ONE GOD*, that God is *ONE PERSON*, and that this Person is the *FATHER*. We object, therefore, to the doctrine of the trinity, because it contradicts this general tenor, and because all the passages, produced by the Trinitarians, will admit of a fair interpretation, on unitarian principles. (c)

CHAPTER

(c) The Trinitarians assert, that notwithstanding they believe a trinity of persons in the divine essence, they preserve the unity. But it may be clearly demonstrated they do not. The Father they maintain is God, the Son, God, and the Holy Ghost, God. They maintain also, that they are three distinct persons, that is, that one is not the other. On these principles it necessarily follows, that the Father is God *exclusively* of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that the Son is God *exclusively* of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost is God *exclusively* of the Father, and of the Son. In other words, it follows, that there must be *three Gods*.

Again, if the foregoing statement be just, the *three* taken together must be more than any *one* of them taken separately. If, therefore, *one* be of himself God, the *three* taken together must

CHAPTER III.

Of the Sense in which Christ is the Lord of David, and of the Meaning of the Phrase, Son of God, as applied to Christ.

MR. Hawker observes in his first sermon, that the words of his text, Matt. xxii. 42, "are not a little demonstrative of the great point in question." (f) To me they appear to have nothing to do with it. It seems from the preceding verses, that the Pharisees and Sadducees had been proposing a number of questions to our saviour, for no other purpose than that of ensnaring him.

He

must be more than God. Or if the *three* taken together make but *one* God, *one* of them taken separately must be less than God.

The author cannot but observe in this place, that the reason, the Unitarians reject the doctrine of the trinity, is not because it is a doctrine above their comprehension, but because of the contradictions involved in every explanation of it. An account of these contradictions may be seen in Mr. Cooper's Summary of Unitarian Arguments, which may be purchased separately from his other Essays.

He was well acquainted with their views, and, in order to put them to silence, asks, *What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him the son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?* Mr. Hawker is of opinion, that, in this passage, our blessed Lord meant to infer, that somewhat above the nature of a human being was appointed to distinguish the character of the Messiah; that notwithstanding Christ, according to the flesh, was to spring from the seed of David, yet, at the same time, by his superior nature, he was to be David's Lord; and that it is highly probable a conviction of this kind was wrought in the minds of his hearers, because the evangelist adds, *They were not able to answer him a word, neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions.* (g)

But this does not seem to be a just interpretation. Are we not rather to suppose, that Jesus Christ is the *son of David*, by natural descent, and that he is his *Lord*, in consequence of his office, being, as the *Messiah*, not only the *Lord of David*, but the *Lord of all mankind*? We may account for the effect the question produced on the minds of the Jews, if we consider, that being totally ignorant
of

of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, it was impossible for them to determine in what respect he was the *Lord of David*.

Our saviour's own words confirm this explanation. David, he says, calls him *Lord in spirit*, by which we are to understand *the spirit of prophecy*; a certain proof that he was not his Lord at the time he wrote the prophecy, which he would have been had he then existed as the Son of God. All he intended was, that the office of the Messiah would be of such a nature, that he might properly be called the *Lord of David*, whenever he should be born into the world.

After this argument, on which Mr. Hawker professes to lay no stress, he proceeds to the consideration of the question, *What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?* (h) And here he asks, "Is he, according to the opinion of our modern Unitarians, simply no other than a man, or, agreeable to the doctrine of the established church, is he the Son of God?" Now what will those of his readers, who are unacquainted with the principles of the Unitarians, conclude from this, but that we deny Jesus Christ to be the Son of God? This I assure them is far from being the case. We as firmly believe

lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as Mr. Hawker. We are not, however, with him of opinion, that because Jesus is called the Son of God, he possesses a divine nature. These are distinct points, which, throughout his observations on this part of the subject, Mr. Hawker has overhastily and unwarily confounded. To avoid obscurity, I will state, in the first place, what appears to me to be the scriptural sense of the phrase, *Son of God*, as applied to Jesus Christ; after which I will examine that part of the argument which may be supposed to prove that because *he* is so styled, he must be of the same nature with his Father.

In the first place, Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, is called the Son of God, on account of his miraculous conception and birth. Luke I. 35. *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* "Here, says Mr. Hawker, is an express and positive reason assigned why Jesus is called the Son of God. From the *Holy Ghost coming upon Mary*, and the *power of the Highest overshadowing her*; by which our blessed Lord deriving his existence in the flesh from a Divine Power, and without the intervention of an human father, he was truly and properly
C called

called the Son of God. A circumstance evidently peculiar to Christ, and by which the title becomes applicable only to him." (i) But this is no proof that our Lord possesses a divine nature, that he is God of the same substance with his Father. It proves only that he was miraculously produced in the womb of the virgin by the power of the Most High, a doctrine which many Unitarians allow. (k)

Secondly, Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, because it was a title which God himself gave him
at

(i) P. 27.

(k) Mr. Hawker seems to lay great stress on the child being called *the holy*, as he renders the original word, but more properly rendered by our translators, *holy thing*; whereby he says, the angel draws a striking distinction between the word made flesh, and the highest created being whatever. But it is to be noticed, that this holy thing was produced in the womb of the virgin by the Holy Ghost, and therefore, on the principles of the Trinitarians, can be nothing more than the human nature of Jesus Christ. If, as Mr. Hawker supposes, it be the title of the word made flesh, that is, of the divine nature of Jesus Christ, it follows that the Word, the second person in the trinity, was produced by the Holy Ghost, the third person in the trinity, in the womb of the virgin. But Mr. Hawker was not, I suppose, aware of this consequence, or he would not have argued in the manner he has done. The only reason assigned in the passage why the child is called holy, is, that he was to be produced out of the common way, by the immediate power of God.

at his baptism ; when, by a voice from heaven, he declared him to be *his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased.* Matt. iii. 17.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, on account of his office, as the Messiah. This appears from the consideration that the phrases, the *Christ*, the *Messiah*, and the *Son of God*, are synonymous. In the gospels of Matthew and John, Peter's confession respecting Christ is in these words ; *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* See Matt. xvi. 16, and John vi. 69. But, Mark viii. 29, it is ; *Thou art the Christ* ; and Luke ix. 20 ; *The Christ of God.* Compare also Matt. xxvi. 63, with Luke xxii. 66, 70. It is also said, John i. 34, that John bare record concerning him, that he was *the Son of God* ; but v. 41, we are informed, that *one, of the two disciples who heard him, and followed Jesus, findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.* But the most striking passage is John x. 36. *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world ; Thou blasphemest ; because I said I am the Son of God ?*

Fourthly, Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, on account of his resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4. *And declared to be the Son of God with power,*

power, by the resurrection from the dead. He is said also, Col. i. 15, to be the first born of every creature, or, of the whole creation, a term which the apostle explains, v. 18, by calling him the first born from the dead. (1)

On all these accounts, Jesus is called, in the New Testament, the *Son of God*. On all these accounts, do we believe him to be the *Son of God* in a sense peculiar to himself; in a sense in which no other being is entitled to the appellation. I hope, therefore, none of my readers will suppose with Mr. Hawker, that we consider this phrase, when applied to our blessed Lord, in the light of a mere, complimentary title.

I will now proceed to examine those of Mr. Hawker's arguments which may be supposed to prove, that because Jesus is called the Son of God, his nature must be divine.

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(1) It seems from these and other places, that the resurrection from the dead is represented, in the New Testament, as a new creation, or a new state of existence, in which, Jesus Christ, because he is the first that rose, not to die again, is called the head, the first born, the chief. I Cor. xv. 20, he is called *the first fruits of them that slept*. Rev. i. 5, he is styled *the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead*; and, Rev. iii. 14, *the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God*.

The first proof which belongs to this part of the subject, is that which he deduces from the expressive phrases with which the term, Son of God, is connected, (*m*) such as *the only begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, the beloved Son of God, the dear Son of God, the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature.* To this it may be answered, that the three first phrases are expressive only of affection; and that, in this sense, they are peculiarly applicable to Jesus Christ, whom we believe to be a person most dear to God the Father. Similar expressions are used also with respect to *others*, as well as with respect to *Christ*. Exod. iv. 22, Israel is called the *first born Son of God*. Heb. xi. 17, Isaac is said to be the *only begotten son of Abraham*; and, Eph. v. 1, the apostle Paul exhorts the Ephesians to walk worthy of God, as *dear, as beloved children*. He is styled the *image of the invisible God*, because he bears the nearest resemblance to him of any being with whom we are acquainted. The phrase, *first born of every creature*, has already been explained.

Mr. Hawker's next proof is taken from our Lord's answer to the Jews, respecting the cripple he had healed on the sabbath-day. (*n*) John v. 17.

(*m*) P. 23.

(*n*) P. 31.

17. 18. *But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also, that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. But this construction of the Jews was nothing more than their own wilful and wicked misrepresentation of his meaning. It does not appear, that the meek and lowly Jesus had ever conceived such a thought; and no sooner had they made the insinuation, than he rejected the idea with abhorrence. Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself; and again, v. 30, I can of mine own self do nothing.*

Another passage which Mr. Hawker quotes is John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* But this no more proves, that Christ was possessed of the same nature with his Father, than his prayer, respecting his disciples, proves that he requested of his Father, that they might possess it. John xvii. 20--22. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. See also I Cor. iii. 8.*

As a farther proof that our Lord possesses a
divine

divine nature, Mr. Hawker produces the instance of the blind man who acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God, and worshipped him accordingly. See John ix. 35—38. By confessing him, however, to be the son of God, the blind man meant nothing more than an acknowledgement that Jesus was the *Messiah*, to which it has already been proved, the phrase, *Son of God*, is synonymous. With respect to the term *worship*, had not Mr. Hawker laid so much stress on it, I should not have thought there would have been any necessity to have informed my reader, that it does not always imply *religious worship*. It is said, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, that *all the congregation bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king* (David.) And Matt. xviii. 26, Our saviour says, *The servant fell down and worshipped his Lord*. By the word *worship*, therefore, when applied to inferior beings, we are to understand nothing more than *an extraordinary degree of respect*. It is to be understood in the *highest sense*, only when applied to that great Being whom our Lord himself declares to be the sole object of religious adoration. Matt. iv. 10. *Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and HIM only shalt thou serve*.

The declaration of Peter, of the Eunuch, of Nathaniel, of Martha, of John, and of *the spirits of darkness*, as Mr. Hawker styles the demoniacs, that

that Jesus was the Son of God, is to be considered in no other light than their testimony that he was the Messiah or the Christ.

The charge of blasphemy brought by the high priest against our saviour for declaring himself to be the Son of God, seems to have been founded on a law existing among the Jews, by which it was made blasphemy for any one *falsely* to assume that title, or in other words, to declare himself to be the Messiah. John xix. 7. *We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.* Dr. Lardner supposes that the Jews had learned this title and character of the Messiah from Ps. ii. 7—12. (o)

The last passage to which Mr. Hawker refers, which has any relation to this part of the subject, is Rom. i. 4; where the apostle Paul says, *he was declared to the Son of God with power*; "plainly testifying," says Mr. Hawker, by this expression, what the apostles sentiments were, that this appellation was not with Christ a barren title, but accompanied with that plenitude of authority which the relationship might be supposed to include, differing most essentially in every point, when applied to any mere human character, and when spoken

(o) Dr. Lardner's letter on the Logos, p. 24. last edition.

spoken of him who came in all the power of the Highest." (p)

In answer to these observations, I will present my reader with a paraphrase of the words by Mr. Locke, who, as an impartial commentator, stands high in the opinion of all. "With most mighty power," says he, "declared to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead." He adds in a note, "he that will read in the original what St. Paul says, Eph. i. 19. 20, of the power which God exerted in raising up Christ from the dead, will hardly avoid thinking, that he sees St. Paul labouring for words to express the greatness of it." (q)

I have now, I believe, examined all the passages Mr Hawker has produced which relate to this part of the controversy, not one of which seems to prove, that because Jesus is called the Son of God, he possesses a divine nature. The natural conclusion is, that he is so styled, merely on account of his character and office.

Before I dismiss this part of the subject, I may ask, how it is, if Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, be really possessed of a divine nature, that no passage is to be found in the New Testament, which

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in direct terms asserts it? This would have put the matter out of dispute. But it cannot, I think, be pretended to be the case,

It may also farther be asked, how it is, that Mr. Hawker and other Trinitarians, who with him assert that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal Father, preserve the doctrine of the divine unity? The very terms, Father and Son, necessarily imply, that one preceded the other. This being the case, if the word, eternal, be used in the same sense when applied to each, the assertion contains as gross a contradiction as can possibly be uttered. But whether the word be used in the same sense or not, it is a self evident truth, that a being, who is begotten, must necessarily be distinct from the being who begets him. If, therefore, the Son were begotten of the Father, he must necessarily be a being distinct from the Father. But if the Father and the Son be distinct beings, and each of them at the same time God, it necessarily follows that there must be two Gods; a doctrine which is contradicted in almost every page of the scriptures.

By the same mode of reasoning it may be proved, that the Holy Ghost, on the supposition he proceeded from the Father and Son, is a third God.

Indeed,

Indeed, allowing the principles of the athanasians to be true, for any thing we know to the contrary, there may be many more. If a reason ever existed for the Father to beget one Son of the same nature with himself, a reason might also exist for him afterwards to beget another; and there may have been generations and processions of this kind innumerable. Thus it is, that those, who have introduced into our holy religion what are called these *awful* mysteries, have degraded the divine nature.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Passages in the New Testament which are supposed to prove our Lord's Pre-existence.

MR. Hawker asserts, that the evidences we have of our Lord's pre-existent state and dignity, are the great criteria of his divinity. (r) He then produces a number of passages to prove this pre-existent state. But even allowing his own interpretation of them to be true, it would not follow, that Christ was possessed of a divine nature; since

(r) P. 41.

since it was possible for him to have enjoyed a state of dignity previous to his birth, and at the same time to be a creature, who derived his existence and all his powers from God.

Professing myself, however, to be of opinion, that our Lord had no existence before he was born, I will proceed to examine all the passages Mr. Hawker has brought forwards to prove the contrary doctrine.

John xvii. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* But so far is this prayer from proving the deity of Jesus Christ, that it is a most direct and solemn avowal of his own to the contrary; a most direct and solemn avowal, that the glory for which he prayed, of whatever nature it might be, was solely at the disposal of his heavenly Father.

Perhaps it may be said, that our saviour did not put up this prayer in his divine, but in his human nature. To this it may be answered, that the human nature had no glory with the Father before the world was, not existing, as the Trinitarians themselves allow, till it was born of Mary. Those of them, therefore, who contend that the interpretation Mr. Hawker has given, is the true one,
are

are reduced to the necessity of supposing, that the second person in the trinity prayed to the first, that is, that God prayed to God, or, of giving up the passage, as proving nothing in favour of their scheme.

Those, who disbelieve the pre-existent state of Christ, suppose that the glory, for which he prayed, was a glory which he had in the divine counsels before the world was, and which was about to be conferred upon him. The reasons for this interpretation are the following.

1. That this glory does not appear, from the connection, to have been a glory which he before possessed, but a glory which he was to receive as the reward of his meritorious conduct. v. 4. 5.

I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do, and now O Father, &c.

2. That the glory was not of a nature peculiar to Christ, but which he himself speaks of as enjoying in common with his disciples. v. 22. *And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.* It deserves attention also, that the phraseology of the last mentioned verse, is similar to that of the passage we are considering. Christ asserts, that he had given the disciples this glory. Not that we are to suppose, he had put them into actual possession

possession of it; but had given it to them in the same manner that he had received it, by appointment, and by promise.

3. There are other similar expressions in the New Testament, which Trinitarians, as well as ourselves, are obliged to explain in the same manner. Eph. i. 4, Christians are said to be *chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*; and II. Tim. i. 9, Grace is said to have been *given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began*.

John vi. 38. *I came down from heaven*. John viii. 42. *I proceeded forth, and came from God*. To these passages may be added John viii. 23. *Ye are from beneath, I am from above: Ye are of this world, I am not of this world*; and John xvi. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father*. That by these expressions our Lord intended nothing more than that he was a divine messenger invested with a divine commission, seems evident from the following similar passages. Matt. xxi. 25. *The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?* that is, was it of divine or of human authority? John i. 6. *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John*. John xvii. 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world*. What Jesus meant by saying, *he proceeded forth and*
came

came from God, he himself explains John viii. 42. *Jesus said, I proceeded forth, and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.* Thus evidently teaching us, that the phrases, *proceeding forth, and coming from God*, are synonymous to the phrase, *sent from God*. It may be observed also concerning these expressions, that in whatever manner they are explained, they flatly contradict the doctrine of our Lord's deity. The person who *sends*, and the person who *is sent*, must necessarily be distinct, and the one superior to the other.

John viii. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* To understand this passage, nothing more is necessary than to attend to its connection. The Jews had been reproving Christ for making himself superior to Abraham. He answered them, that Abraham, great as he was, *rejoiced to see his day, that he saw it, and was glad.* Now Mr. Hawker, I suppose, will agree with me, that by this nothing more was intended, than that Abraham rejoiced in the prospect of his day, owing to the promise which God had made him, that *in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed.* The Jews, however, imagining, or pretending to imagine, that he meant he had actually seen Abraham in the flesh, ask him how it was possible, since he was not yet fifty years old. For reasons of his own he did not chuse to explain himself, but repeats his former assertion in
still

still stronger terms, *Verily, verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* As if he had said, "You need not be surprised at what I inform you, for I was not only promised, as the Messiah, to your father Abraham, but existed, in the divine appointment and promise, long before the time of Abraham."

The arguments in favour of this interpretation are the following.

1. That there is as much reason to put this construction on the last assertion of our Saviour, as on the first, viz. *that Abraham rejoiced to see his day, that he saw it, and was glad.* Now no one supposes from this, that Abraham really saw Christ in the flesh; but that he saw him only as existing in the divine decree and promise. Why then should we not have recourse to the same method of interpretation in explaining the last assertion, and conclude, that Jesus did not mean, that he personally existed before Abraham, but only that he was appointed by God to be the Messiah, and promised to the world before Abraham?

2. It is unnatural to suppose, that Jesus should so suddenly change his meaning, when the phrases are so similar, from asserting that he only existed, in the divine purpose and promise, at the time of Abraham,

Abraham, to a declaration of his own personal existence before Abraham. On the contrary, is it not much more natural to imagine, that in the sense in which Christ existed at the time of Abraham, in that sense, and in that only, he existed before Abraham; that as Abraham saw his day in the divine predictions and promises, so likewise he existed, in the days, and even before the days, of Abraham, in these predictions and promises?

3. There are other passages in the New Testament, as has been before observed, which we are obliged to explain in the same manner. In addition to those already quoted, see Rev. xiii. 8.

4. The phrase *εγω ειμι*, I am, ought to have been rendered, I am *he*, that is, *the Messiah*, it being evidently elliptical. Our translators have so rendered it twice in this chapter. See v. 24 and 28. The same elliptical expression is also put into the mouth of the blind man. John ix. 9. *Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said εγω ειμι, I am he. (f)*

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(f) The reader, if he will look into the english Testament, will perceive that the word *he*, in all these instances, is printed in italics, as making no part of the original.

But perhaps it will be said, that in this instance, the Jews understood our saviour as asserting his pre-existence. To this it may be answered, that, in general, the questions of the Jews were proposed to him out of captiousness, and that they always endeavoured to put a false construction on his words, hoping, by these means, to lay hold of something whereon they might ground an accusation against him, and make him obnoxious to the people. In consequence of this, his language was sometimes designedly ambiguous; and he would seldom, if ever, condescend to explain himself to them. An instance of this kind may be seen in the 51st and 52d verses of this very chapter; where he says, *If a man keep my saying he shall never see death. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.* It is remarkable, that Jesus does not add a word by way of explanation. See also John vi. 47—59; where he persists in his figurative mode of expression, respecting the necessity of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, although he saw their gross, and perhaps wilful mistake, of his words. The last instance to which I shall refer, is John ii. 18—22; where the Jews, offended at his seeming presumption, desire a sign in confirmation

firmation of his authority. He answers, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* Then said the Jews, *Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* To this he made no reply, nor did even his disciples know his real meaning till after his resurrection. For it is added by the evangelist, *That he spake of the temple of his body.* When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. I have thought proper to treat this objection at large, because it appears to me, from the consideration of the passages I have quoted, and of many others, that it is impossible to establish the truth of any doctrine, merely from the opinion which the Jews entertained, or pretended to entertain, of our Lord's assertions.

John iii. 13. *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man who is in heaven.* If these words be taken in their literal sense, the assertions they contain are not true. For

1. Allowing Jesus Christ to have been in heaven, as a pre-existent being, we have no intimation that he ever ascended up into heaven, as the *son of man*, till after his resurrection.

2. Other

2. Other men had actually ascended up to heaven. Enoch, we are informed, was translated, and the prophet Elijah was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire.

Our Lord, therefore, in this instance, must be understood figuratively. By ascending up into heaven, he most probably meant, that he was intimately acquainted with the divine will, (*t*) and by his coming down from heaven, that he was commissioned by God to reveal it to the world. Mr. Wakefield thus explains the words. "No one hath a *perfect knowledge* of the will of God, but he who is immediately commissioned to declare his will, even the son of man, who has always an especial communication with God." This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the parallel passage, John i. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of Father, he hath declared him.* i. e. No man ever had such a perfect knowledge of the will of God as Jesus Christ. That this is the proper sense of the

(*t*) Of this opinion was Raphaelius, the son, who was a believer in the divinity of Jesus Christ. See his preface to his father's annotations on the scriptures. So also was Dr. Doddridge, "Ascended up to heaven, to search into the truths of God. The phrase of ascending into heaven, is plainly used in this sense, Deut. xxx. 12. Rom. x. 6, and Prov. xxx. 4." See Doddridge in loc.

the phrase, *seeing God*, is evident from iii. John, ver. 11. *He that doth evil hath not seen God.*

John vi. 62. *What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before.* Neither can we take these words in their literal sense, because it does not appear that Jesus Christ was ever before in heaven, as *the son of man*. But, notwithstanding I am persuaded they have no reference to the supposed state of our Lord's pre-existence, I frankly own, that I never met with an explanation of them, which perfectly satisfied me. The most natural supposition is, that, standing in the midst of figurative expressions, they are themselves also figurative. Dr. Lardner is of opinion, that nothing more was meant by Jesus, than that he should not always be personally here. The following is an extract from a letter of his to the Rev. Mr. Wiche, of Maidstone, Kent. "As for John vi. 62. I would refer you to Grotius: I think we must not understand our Lord there too literally. For we are not thence to conclude, that our Lord's body came down from heaven; nor are we to suppose, that many or most of those, to whom he was then speaking, would *see* him ascend to heaven. I have been apt to think, that thereby our Lord intended only to say, that he should not always be personally here, but should leave this world, which was the most discouraging thought to all the carnal

nal Jews, and much suited to his purpose on the present occasion. If you please, you may consult my second volume of sermons, p. 188, &c. It is observable that our Lord says, John xvi. 5, *I go my way to him that sent me*; and vii. 33, *And then I go to him that sent me*. He seems designedly to avoid the word return." Should the above not be the true meaning, it surely cannot be pretended, that the doubtful interpretation of one obscure passage is to be set in opposition to the general tenor of scripture.

John i. 1. 2. 3. 4. 10. 11. 12. 14. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, The same, &c.* This passage does not appear to me to relate either to the divinity, or to the pre existence of Christ, but to be a description of the divine Wisdom, as manifested in the works of creation, and particularly in the dispensation of the gospel. The apostle might take the idea from different passages in the Old Testament, in which the work of creation is ascribed sometimes to the *word*, sometimes to the *wisdom* of God. Gen. i. 3. *God said let there be light, and there was light.* Ps. xxxiii. 6. *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Ver. 9. *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.* Ps. 104. 24. *O LORD how manifold are thy works! in wisdom,*
hast

hast thou made them all. Ps. cxxxvi. 5. To him that by wisdom made the heavens. Prov. iii. 19. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens.

Particularly does he seem to have had in view that beautiful personification of the divine wisdom in the book of Proverbs. Prov. viii. 22—31. *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.*

This seems to be the word or wisdom which the apostle John describes in the introduction to his gospel,

gospel, by which he asserts, that the world was made, but which was in a more especial manner manifested, by dwelling in the person of Jesus Christ, being that divine principle, which, in other places, is called the spirit, or the power of God, and to which our saviour refers both his doctrines and his works. By rendering the term *logos*, *Wisdom* (*u*) instead of *Word*, which we may with very great propriety, and by substituting the word *it* instead of *him*, the following will perhaps be the true interpretation of the passage.

In the beginning was Wisdom, and Wisdom was with God, and Wisdom was, not a person distinct from God, but God himself, being an attribute under which he is very frequently described. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by it, and without it was not any thing made that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of men. It (Wisdom) was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came to its own people, that is, the Jews who are called God's people, but its own received it not. But as many as received it, to them it gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on its name.
And

(*u*) Le Clerc renders the term *logos*, ratio, reason. But he remarks, that *logos*, reason, is the same with σοφία, sapientia, wisdom, and that they are often put for each other.

And wisdom was made, or rather was, or became flesh, by being united with flesh, by residing in the man Christ Jesus, and dwelt among us, and we beheld its glory, the glory as of the only begotten, or well beloved of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This rendering will be confirmed, when it is considered, that Jesus Christ is not called the *logos* in any other part of John's gospel, or by any of the other evangelists or apostles. On the contrary, the only reason which John assigns for writing his history, is, that those for whose use he wrote, *might believe*, not that Jesus was himself the *logos*, the supreme God, but that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through his name.* See John xx. 31.

The passage Mr. Hawker quotes from John's first epistle, refers, not to the person of Christ, but to the doctrine of eternal life which he taught. The words are thus rendered by Beausobre and L'Enfant: "We publish unto you concerning the word of life. Him, who was from the beginning; whom we have heard; whom we have seen with our eyes, whom we have looked upon, and our hands have handled: For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Fa-

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ther,

ther, and was manifested unto us. *Him whom we have seen and heard publish we unto you.*" (v)

II Cor. viii. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor; that ye through his poverty might be rich.* If the learned Bishop of St. David's, in his controversy with Dr. Priestley, has not produced this passage to prove, that the Corinthians were believers in our Lord's divinity, which Mr. Hawker intimates he might have done; (w) it was, I should presume, because it never appeared to him to have any thing to do with his divinity, since it was possible for Christ to have been rich in a pre-existent state without being God. It does not appear to me to prove a state of pre-existence, notwithstanding Mr. Hawker seems so very confident in asserting the contrary. The truth is, he has taken for granted what he ought to have proved, that it was impossible, in any sense, for our Lord to

(v) This rendering is very ably supported by Mr. Lindsey, in his second Address to the Youth of the two Universities, p. 46. 47, note. Indeed the whole section, from p. 25—56, containing an excellent paraphrase of the preface to John's gospel, is deserving attention, notwithstanding Mr. Hawker's assertion, p. 52, that it is too chimerical to be treated seriously. Such things are easily asserted. But let the reader consult Mr. L., and judge for himself.

(w) P. 55. Note.

to have been rich, unless he had enjoyed a prior state of dignity. But it is the opinion of many wise and good men, that the riches of Christ were the great powers he received from God, and which he possessed in this world, and that his meritorious poverty consisted in not employing them for the sake of promoting his own private ease and advantage. The translation Mr. Wakefield has given of the verse, and which is certainly the true one, confirms this interpretation. *Ye know the favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, that while he was rich, (x) for your sakes he became poor, &c.* From this it plainly appears, that the riches of Christ were something he possessed, while he was on earth. And what could these riches be, but those divine powers with which he was invested?

Philippians ii. 5—9. *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.* Mr. Hawker pronounces also, with too much confidence,

(x) The original is *πλουσιος ων*, being rich.

fidence, upon this passage. The reason is, that he has here also taken it for granted, that this form of God was something which our saviour enjoyed in a prior state of dignity, and which he laid aside when he made his appearance in the world. It may however refer only to something he possessed when on earth. The following excellent interpretation of the passage, in Mr. Linsey's Sequel to his Apology for resigning the vicarage of Catterick, will perhaps convince the reader that it does.

"It is commonly presumed, that this passage conveys a full proof of Christ's pre-existence; and that *the form of God* here spoken of relates to the splendid condition of being, which he possessed before his appearance in the world, or was *found in fashion as a man*. An unprejudiced examination of the apostle's words will probably shew, that he did not intend to convey any such thing by them."

"He is obviously recommending humility and obedience to God by the example of Christ. But these are the virtues of a creature; and cannot belong to God. This therefore bespeaks Christ to have been the creature of God, though greatly favoured and beloved. His high rank, eminence, and dignity, from which he as it were descended, is described by his being *in the form of God*."

"This

"This *form of God* was something possessed by Christ when he was upon earth. For the apostle speaks of it as belonging to Christ Jesus, names which marked him out, as a man amongst men. It is moreover no part of St. Paul's enquiry or concern here, who or what he had been in a former condition of being, supposing there had been any such. He would certainly point to what fell within the observation of beholders, and not to a part of the character of Jesus, which was unknown, and never explicitly mentioned by the apostle; I would say, never mentioned at all. St. Paul also, as will soon be perceived, speaks of our Lord as *laying aside this form of God whilst he was amongst men; not before he came among them.* And the expressions used by him confirm this, *μορφή θεοῦ ὡς ἑστῆς* being in the form of God, as our translators have well rendered it; not *παλαιάς*, *having been.* And it seems emphatical here; although the present time is sometimes put for the past."

"The term *μορφή*, *forma*, *facies*, *figura*, imports the outward form, face, resemblance of any thing or person, in opposition to its real internal nature and constitution. We are then to inquire, what might be that form or appearance * of God which Christ

* *μορφή θεοῦ*, the character, not the essence or nature of God; as *μορφή δούλου* afterwards denotes the character of a servant.

Christ wore upon earth? Now this evidently consisted in those extraordinary endowments of a divine wisdom and power, which shone forth in him: by which he spoke so as never man spoke, knew the hearts of men, healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, raised the dead, multiplied a few loaves to the feeding of many thousands; in short, *resembled* God, and not weak, frail, indigent man."

" This was his great dignity. Next follows the account of his humility: *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, says our english version. But this was no proof in the least of his humility; but the contrary. Common sense therefore, and all just criticism, must approve the better interpretation given by the learned Dr. Clarke, and by him supported with great ability, * and the testimony of the most antient christian writers: *viz. being in the form of God, he did not look on it as a prize to be hastily caught at to be like God*; did not eagerly covet to be honoured for his godlike powers; was not ambitious of displaying them."

" But his humility went farther. *He made himself of no reputation*, *κενотой εαυτου*, *emptied himself*, laid aside all these high powers and prerogatives, as if he had not been possessed of them, save where the
glory

* Scrip. doct. of the Trin. p. 179, 180.

glory of God and benefit of mankind called him forth to exert them, and avoided all praise and honour of men on that account.

“ And took (rather, leaving out the connecting particle,) taking upon him the form, μορφήν, of a servant, or slave; who has nothing that he calls his own, (the son of man hath not where to lay his head; Matth. viii. 20.) and whose province is to serve others; (the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Matth. xx. 28.) Thus he laid aside the form of God, during his abode here below, and took the form of a servant.”

“ And was made in the likeness of men; it should rather be rendered, was, or being in the likeness of men: for St. Paul is not declaring what God made Christ, but how he conducted and demeaned himself; and is carrying on the description of his humility: and he observes, that he had nothing, he assumed nothing to distinguish him from ordinary mortal men, being exposed to the same sufferings, and all our sinless infirmities; ὅτι ὁμοιωματί ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος. John i. 14. Rom. viii. 3, &c.”

“ The apostle now descends to the last stage of our Lord's humility: for he could sink no lower.”

“ And

"*And being found in fashion as a man**, he humbled himself, &c. i. e. being in the circumstances and condition of a mortal man, σχηματι ως ανθρωπος, taking nothing upon him beyond the rate of weak, common mortals; although he had power to have resisted and overcome his enemies, he submitted to the most barbarous usage, and a most cruel and infamous death, in obedience to God. John x. 18."

"Wherefore God hath highly exalted him.) His exaltation was not the reward of his humility in stripping himself of any supposed dignity or happiness enjoyed in a former state of being; for the apostle gives not the least intimation of any thing of that kind, and speaks only of his present conduct and behaviour. But it was the reward of his labours, and innocent and virtuous sufferings unto death in the cause of truth and righteousness." (y)

The following translation then is most probably the true one. *Let the same mind be in you which*
was

* Καὶ σχηματι ευγεθεις ως ανθρωπος—(and, being found in fashion as a man.—) ευγεθεις is often no more than the latin *existens*, or *being*; and so it answers to γενομενος in the verse before, as does σχηματι, in fashion here, to εν ομοιωματι, in the likeness there; and so these two phrases appear to me exactly of the same import. *Peirce* in loc.

(y) *Lindsey's Sequel*, p. 272—277.

was also in Christ Jesus. Who being in the form of God, did not look on it as a prize to be eagerly caught at to be like God: But emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant, being in the likeness of a mortal man. And being in the circumstances and condition of a mortal man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God, &c.

Mr. Hawker intimates, that much more may be made of this passage than he has made of it; (z) but that the other points respecting which it gives information, will more properly meet him under another part of the subject. The passage however is not afterwards quoted.

CHAPTER V.

Of Mr. Hawker's Proofs from the New Testament that Jesus Christ is the Maker and Preserver of the World.

OF the passages, which are commonly supposed to ascribe the creation and support of the
 G world

world to Jesus Christ, Mr. Hawker has produced but four. John i. 1.—3. Heb. i. 1—10. Heb. iii. 3. 4. Col. i. 15—17. To these may be added Eph. iii. 9; and then we shall have all the passages in the New Testament which can be supposed to prove the doctrine. I will proceed to examine them in their proper order.

John i. 1—3. *In the beginning was the word, &c.* I have already attempted to prove, that this passage has no relation to Jesus Christ, but to the logos the word, or wisdom of God, which, as it were, resided in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews i. 1. 2. *God who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers, by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all (a) things, by*

(a) Mr. Lindsey, in the Sequel to his Apology, makes an observation which clearly evinces, that the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, did not mean in this, or in any other passage, to ascribe the proper creation of the world to Christ or his agency. "For it being, manifestly," says he, "the design of the writer, to preserve his countrymen from apostatizing from christianity, and falling back into judaism, a great part of his epistle is spent in proving the superiority of Christ to Moses, and to angels whom they supposed to exercise great powers in their system." Now assuredly no argument would have been more direct and forcible to his point,

by whom also he made the worlds, &c. The word *αἰῶνες* might with much greater propriety be rendered ages than worlds. It is so rendered by our translators, Col. i. 26. "Nor is there," says Dr. Sykes, "any one instance in the New Testament, where more than this is meant by it." (b) The passage therefore should be rendered thus, *By whom also he (God) made the ages*; by which we are to understand the ages of the gospel, or the christian dispensation, which Jesus Christ was the means of introducing and establishing. It may also be observed, that the preposition *διὰ* is not always used to signify the instrument, but sometimes the object. Grotius was of opinion that it was used in this sense here; "Allowing his interpretation to be just," says Dr. Lardner, "and we have a most apt and beautiful sense which is this: *For whom also, or for whose sake also*; or in respect to whom, he disposed and ordered the ages: that is, the antediluvian, the patriarchal, the legal ages, or periods,

point, than that of Christ having been the creator of the world. It must have ended the controversy at once, and given the fullest satisfaction. How strange is it then that the apostle should mention it only incidentally, never lay any particular stress upon it, nor recur to it again? It may assure us, that he believed no such thing himself, and that it is not the true interpretation of his words." Lindsey's Sequel, p. 483. 484.

(b) Dr. Sykes in loc.

riods, and all the divine dispensations towards the sons of men." (c)

The clause, v. 3, *and upholding all things by the word of his power*, may refer to the many miracles our saviour wrought in support of the gospel, and every thing relating to it. Or the whole verse may be read thus, *Who being the brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his (God's) person, and upholding all things by the word of his (God's) power*, relating either to the power of working miracles which Jesus Christ received from his Father, or to the powers communicated to him, by which he is able to govern his church and people.

The sense of v. 6. is, that when God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, all the angels, i. e. messengers (d) of God, were to pay him respect or homage, i. e. acknowledge his superior authority.

Concerning v. 8, Dr. Clarke observes, "that it ought

(c) Dr. Lardner on the Logos. p. 56.

(d) *Ἀγγελοι*, nuncius, a messenger. This is the proper meaning of the word; and by adopting it in the present instance, a more beautiful sense is given to the passage. It seems evident also from the first verse, that the design of the writer, in this part of the epistle, is not to point out the superiority of Christ to angels, (though I firmly believe he is now most deservedly exalted by God above them,) but to all other messengers or prophets.

ought not to be concealed, that the words, [*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,*] may with equal propriety, both from the Greek and Hebrew, be also thus rendered, [*God is thy throne, &c.*] That is, *God is the support of thy throne, &c.*" (e) The latter interpretation is confirmed by the verse immediately following, in which God is called, in the most express terms, the GOD of Jesus Christ. *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore GOD, even THY GOD, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

Ver. 10th. and 11th. *And, thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands, &c.* In explaining this passage, the Unitarians have no occasion for the resource Mr. Hawker mentions; (f) and which, from his manner of writing, he seems to have thought their only one. I can do no better than present my reader with an interpretation of the words by Mr. Emlyn, who, though he held the opinion that Jesus Christ was the instrument employed by the Father in making the world, did not imagine, that any thing could be deduced from this passage in its favour. "We may observe," he says, "that the 10th verse, *and, thou*

(e) Dr. Clarke's *Scrip. Doct. of the Trin.* p. 77. 78.
2nd. edition.

(f) P. 66. note.

thou, Lord, &c. (though it is a new citation) is not prefaced with, *and to the son he saith* as v. 8; or with an *again* as ver. 5. 6, and so ii. 13; but barely, *And, thou, Lord.* Now the God last-mentioned was Christ's God, who had anointed him; and the author, thereupon addressing himself to this God, breaks out into the celebration of his *power*, and especially his *unchangeable dura'tion*; which he dwells upon, as what he principally cites the text for, in order, I conceive, to prove the stability of the son's kingdom before spoken of: *Thy throne, O God, is (or God is thy throne) for ever and ever. God, thy God, has anointed thee: and, thou, Lord, i. e. thou who hast promised him such a throne, art he who laidest the foundation of the earth, and by thy hands madest the heavens, which, though of long and permanent duration, yet will at length perish; but thou remainest; thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.* So that it seems to be a declaration of God's immutability made here, to ascertain the durableness of Christ's kingdom before-mentioned; and the rather so, because this passage had been used originally for the same purpose in the cii. Psalm, viz. to infer thence this conclusion, ver. the last; *the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.* In like manner it here proves, the son's throne should be established for ever and ever, by the same argument, viz. by God's immutability;

lity; and so was very pertinently alledged of God without being applied to the *Son*; to shew how able *his God*, who had anointed him, was to make good and maintain what he had granted him, viz. a durable kingdom for ever."

"That these words were thus understood by the ancients appears hence, that they interpret *thy hands*, ver. 10. to be the *son* and *spirit*, which they could not do, if they understood the sentence to be spoken of Christ. See Irenæus, lib. iv. c. 6. lib. v. c. 3. Tertull. adv. Hermog. c. 45. No one ancient writer ever applied these words to Christ, during the three first centuries; nor does Dr. Waterland pretend they were ever so applied, till the fourth or fifth. See his Sermons, p. 65." (g)

As Mr. Hawker lays so much stress on this first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, asserting that it conveys, in such strong terms, the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, that if it convince not, all farther application to scripture on this point, he fears, will be superfluous and vain, (h) I will make a few observations, which perhaps may induce my reader to think otherwise.

1. Jesus Christ is distinguished from God in the same manner as the prophets are. He himself cannot therefore be God.

(g) Emlyn's works, vol. ii. p. 340, 341. (h) P. 67.

2. He is said to be appointed by God, heir of all things, but were he himself God, and the creator of all things, all things must have been his own without any such appointment.

3. Whatever is meant by the world which Christ is said to have made, it is asserted, that he made it only as God's instrument.

4. He is stiled the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person. But a ray proceeding from a luminous body, must surely be inferior to the body from which it proceedeth. In like manner the image of a person must necessarily be distinct from the being whose image he is.

5. It is said, that Jesus Christ, after having purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, that is, at the right hand of God. But how could this be if he himself were God?

6. We are informed, that if he be superior to other messengers, it is because he is made so by God.

7. The worship, of whatever nature it might be, which was given to Christ, was not given him till after his resurrection, and then in consequence of the divine command. But were he himself God, and

and the creator of all things, it would have been given him before, and without any command.

8. God is called in the most express terms, the GOD of Jesus Christ, and is said to have anointed him with the oil of gladness. But on the supposition that Jesus Christ is himself God, this was absolutely impossible.

Heb. iii. 3. 4. *For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.* Allowing our translation of this passage to stand as it does, all it proves is, that Christ is the builder of a house. But that this house is not a material fabrick, is evident from v. 6; in which the writer adds, *whose house are we.* By the house, therefore, which Christ is said to have built, is to be understood the church, of which Christ is, under God, the founder and head. He, on the contrary, who built all things, is declared to be God, that great Being, who, it is said, v. 2, appointed or made Christ as well as Moses.

There is however good reason to suppose that the writer is speaking of God's house throughout, in which Moses is called a *servant*, and Jesus Christ a *son*. The word *own*, v. 6, is added by our

H

translators.

translators. By leaving it out the following perhaps will be the true interpretation of this obscure passage.

For this man (Jesus Christ) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he is more nearly related to the head or founder of the house or family, who must be supposed to have the greatest honour of the family. For every family has some founder or head; but he who is the supreme head of all families is God the Father. And Moses verily was faithful in all his (God's) family, as a servant, for a testimony of the things that were afterwards to be revealed, but Christ, as a son over his (God's) family, whose family also are we. (i)

I Col. 15—17. *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature: For by him were all things created, &c.* Our reasons, for rejecting the interpretation which Mr. Hawker and other Trinitarians give of this passage, and for referring it to the new creation, or renovation of the world by means of christianity, are the following.

1. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament but one being is mentioned as the Creator and Preserver

(i) The reader will find the whole of the above paraphrase very ably supported by Mr. Peirce.

Preserver of the world: this being is uniformly spoken of as one person; and is said to have made the world immediately by himself. Gen. i. 1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* Neh. ix. 6. *Thou, even thou art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein: and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.* Ps. xxxiii. 6. *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made: and all the host of them, by the breath of his mouth.* Ps. xxxiii. 9. *For he spake, and it was done: he commanded, and it stood fast.* Isaiah xlv. 24. *Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.* Isaiah xlv. 12. *I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.*

2. Agreeable to the declarations of the Old Testament, are those of Christ and his apostles in the New. Matt. vi. 26. *Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not neither do they reap, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.* v. 30. *If God so cloath the grass of the field, &c.* Matt. xi. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.* Mark x. 6. *But from the beginning—God made them, &c.*
John

John vi. 57. *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father.* These are the declarations of our saviour; an indubitable proof that he himself was not concerned in the creation and support of the universe, but that he considered it as the work of God his Father only. In the same manner speak all the apostles. I will mention but one passage, because it appears to me to be decisive, and contains their joint testimony to this most important doctrine. Acts iv. 24—30. *They (the disciples) lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said LORD, THOU art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:—grant—that signs and wonders may be done by thy holy child (servant) (k) Jesus.* From this prayer it must surely be evident, that so far were the apostles from considering their master, who had lately been put to death, as their Creator, that in the most solemn act of devotion, prayer to Almighty God, they stile him only the CHILD or SERVANT of their Creator.

3. The apostle Paul himself, instead of considering Jesus Christ as the maker of heaven and earth.

(k) The word in the original is *pais*, and servant is one of its common acceptations. It is rendered servant by our own translators when applied to David, in the 25th verse of the same chapter.

earth, declared him at Athens to be a MAN, appointed by the maker of heaven and earth hereafter to judge the world. Acts xvii. 24.—31. *God that made the world, and all things that are therein,—the Lord of heaven and earth,—hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that MAN whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* He could not therefore, in his epistle to the Colossians, attribute the creation and preservation of the world to Jesus Christ, without contradicting the uniform tenor of the Old Testament, without contradicting the assertions of Christ himself, and without contradicting his own declaration to the Athenians.

4. If we examine the different passages of scripture in which the word creation occurs, we shall find that it is frequently used in a moral sense, to denote changes that take place in the moral condition of mankind. I might produce several passages from the Old Testament; but I will content myself with producing a few from the writings of the apostle Paul. II Cor. v. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* Ep. ii. 10. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Eph. iv. 24. *And*

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Col. iii.

10. *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

That the word create is used in this sense, in the passage under consideration, seems evident, because the apostle is speaking of a change that had taken place in the moral condition of mankind, by means of the gospel, in the verses which go before, and the verses which immediately follow it. See v. 13. 14; and 21. 22.

5. It is deserving of notice, that neither the earth, the sun, moon, nor stars, nor any material substance is specified, as making a part of this creation, but all things, in general, which is an indefinite expression. (l) What the apostle meant to include under it is evident from what follows. *By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; by the creation of which may be intended,* says Dr. Priestley, *some exercise of that power and authority which were given to Christ after his resurrection.* (m) This idea is confirmed by the epistle to the

(l) See Mark ix. 23. Rom. viii. 32. I Cor. iii. 21. II. Cor. 6. 10. It is observable, that the apostle Paul does not say *the heavens and the earth* were created by Jesus Christ, but simply *all things* that are in heaven and earth.

(m) Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Price. p. 119.

the Ephesians, written about the same time with that to the Colossians; in which we are informed that it was not till God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, that *he set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but in the world to come.* See Eph. i. 20. Now had Jesus Christ absolutely created these thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, this language would have been very improper, as he must then have been above them long before his resurrection, even from the beginning of time, when he first formed them.

6. It may be farther observed, that as v. 16, *all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, are said to have been created by Christ*, so also v. 20, *all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, are said to be reconciled by him*; and Eph. i. 10, *all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, are said to be gathered by him into one*; from which it is natural to conclude, that the three expressions are synonymous. But the reconciliation is declared to be an event subsequent to our Lord's death. The creation therefore, if it be synonymous to the reconciliation, must have been subsequent to it also.

7. The whole of this creation is ascribed to a
man,

man, to one who had lately suffered and died. v. 14. It cannot therefore refer to the creation of the heaven and the earth, which took place 4000 years before.

I will now proceed to give what appears to me to be the true interpretation of the passage.

The apostle begins with calling Christ *the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, or of the whole creation.* These expressions are certain proofs that he is not himself *the invisible God*, for if he were, such things could not be said of him. By calling him *the image of the invisible God*, the apostle no doubt means, that he bears as perfect a resemblance to the invisible God, as it is possible for a created being to bear. The phrase, *first born of every creature*, may relate either to his being the head of the new creation of which he is treating, or to his being *the first born*, or *first begotten from the dead*, v. 18.

It follows, v. 16, *For by him were all things created, or renewed, (n) that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.* It is agreed by many learned men, that this highly figurative language is borrowed from the common notions

(n) This is the signification of the greek word *πρῶτος* in other places. See particularly the LXX. Psalm li. 10.

tions the Jews entertained respecting the different orders of beings in the heavenly world, in order that the apostle might thus magnify the gospel the more. On account of the reason mentioned in the fifth observation, all he intended by it seems to have been, that a change had taken place in both worlds, in consequence of the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. Men were reconciled to God, and both men and angels subjected by God to the government of his Son. This interpretation is confirmed by a parallel passage in the prophecy of Isaiah. *Isai. lxx. 17. Behold I create new heavens and a new earth : and the former shall not be remembered.* From this prophecy no one concludes, that the present system of things was to be done away ; but that the prophet, by images borrowed from the natural world, describes the changes which would take place in the moral world, in consequence of the introduction of christianity. Would men divest themselves of their prejudices, and explain particular texts of scripture in agreement with its uniform declarations, they would see this passage in the same light.

Ver. 16. 17—*All things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* All things relating to this new creation were brought about by his means, and in order to be made subject to his dominion. And in

it he is himself the chief, and by him the whole is holden together.

It follows, v. 18, That *he is the head of the body, the church*; as though the apostle meant to include under this title all the foregoing particulars.

Eph. iii. 9. *Who (God) created all things by Jesus Christ.* It is highly probable that the words *by Jesus Christ* are an interpolation. They are wanting in the Alexandrian, Ephrem, Cambridge Manuscripts, and four others; also in the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions, and in several of the Fathers. (o) On the supposition they absolutely make a part of the original text, the connection, I think, would determine that they referred only to the new creation. Of this opinion was Mr. Locke. (p)

The explanation of the passages, I have now given, will be confirmed, when we consider that they are but few, and that, if we suppose them to refer to the proper creation of the world by Jesus Christ, they contradict the general tenor of the Old and New Testament, which uniformly ascribes it to God the Father. Mr. Hawker was aware of this difficulty, and in order to get over it, he has recourse to that *mysterious union* by which he supposes the Father

(o) Wetstein and Griesback in loc. (p) Locke in loc.

Father and the Son are one. (q) But he has brought no passages from the New Testament which prove this union. The declaration of our saviour John x. 30, *I and my Father are one*, has been considered in the third chapter. His assertion, John v. 19. 20, *Whatsoever things the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise,—and the Father will shew him greater works than these that ye may marvel*, refers only to the power which was given him by God to work miracles. This is evident from John xiv. 12; where he makes use of similar language with respect to his disciples. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father*. Neither can any thing be concluded, in favour of this union, from the phrases, *the Father who dwelleth in me, I am in the Father, and the Father in me*: for the same is also said of Christians, John i. iv. 16. *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him*.

(q) P. 79.—81.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI.

No Traces to be found of our Lord's Personal Appearance in the World previous to his Birth.

THE direct evidence, which Mr. Hawker has produced from scripture, in favour of our Lord's pre-existent state and dignity, has been examined in the two foregoing chapters. The interpretation which I have there given of the different passages, seems to be confirmed by the consideration which Mr. Hawker himself has suggested, viz. that had Christ really enjoyed such a state, it is more than probable "that some appearances of him should have been discovered, through the many intermediate ages from the fall of man to his advent in the flesh." (r) But in my opinion, no account of such appearances is any where to be found.

The first argument which Mr. Hawker brings forward, as tending to prove the personal appearance of Jesus Christ in the early ages of the world, is taken from the consideration, that the invisibility of

of the Divine Being to mortal eyes, is the uniform doctrine of the scriptures; when, at the same time, there are many very striking passages, in the Old Testament, in which the personal appearance of Jehovah is said to have happened.

Had Mr. Hawker here recollected his own definition of the term God, he must have perceived that this argument would have proved much more than he intended it to prove. By the term God, he professes to understand God the Father, together with the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is evident from his explanation of I Cor. xv. 24—28. (/) And this, being allowed to be a proper definition,

(f) P. 90. note.—The passage is, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the *Father*; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” The last clause Mr. Hawker thus explains, “And then God the Father, together with the Son and Holy Spirit, will be all in all.” It is surely strange that any person should thus interpret the apostle’s words, when he himself declares, v. 24, that by the term God he meant the *Father* only. This, as Dr. Priestley very justly observes, is not quoting scripture, but making it.

definition, it directly follows, that all those passages which assert the invisibility of God, assert the invisibility of the Son, as well as of the Father. According to Mr. Hawker, therefore, it could be neither the one nor the other who made this personal appearance.

Mr. Hawker professes also to be of opinion, that, in the relation the Jewish Scriptures give us of the appearances of Jehovah, but one and the same being is uniformly described, (*t*) and that this being was Jesus Christ. (*u*) Of course he must suppose that Jesus Christ was the Jehovah who manifested himself to Moses, and said, *thou canst not see my face, and live*. See Ex. xxxiii. 20—23. And yet he advances this very passage as a proof of the invisibility of the supreme Father! (*v*)

Having observed thus much to shew how very inconsistent Mr. Hawker, in this instance, is with himself, I will endeavour to inform my reader how it is, these seeming contradictions of scripture, respecting the invisibility of the Divine Being, may be reconciled; and which, if they could not be reconciled, would bear as hard upon the trinitarian hypothesis, as they do upon our own. For if Jesus Christ be God, of the same nature with his Father, it follows that he must also be invisible as well as the Father.

That

(*t*) P. 98. 99.—(*u*) P. 95.—(*v*) P. 94.

That God is invisible, in the strict sense of the word, is a doctrine I most firmly believe. As the uncreated Spirit, who fills immensity, it is impossible that he should be the object of mortal sight. But it does not, therefore, follow, that he cannot make extraordinary manifestations of himself by outward symbols, by fire, by cloud, by an audible voice, and by some particular figure. And surely it is much more natural to suppose, that all the appearances, recorded in the Old Testament, were of this symbolic nature, than to imagine, as Mr. Hawker does, that there are *two* Jehovahs, the one of whom was visible, and the other invisible. (w) For this is contrary to the assertion of Moses, who declared to the children of Israel from God himself, that *Jehovah their God was ONE Jehovah*, by whom must have been intended, that very Jehovah, who had all along manifested himself to them.

But Mr. Hawker is of opinion, that there are many passages, in the New Testament, which may be

(w) It may be asked, in this place, how it is that Mr. Hawker reconciles his ideas on this subject with his assertion, p. 331, "That there is not an attribute or a name by which the incommunicable character of Jehovah is known in scripture, but what we find equally applied to our blessed Lord;" when, according to himself, in his third sermon, the Father possesses the attribute of invisibility, but the Son possesses it not.

be considered as presumptive proofs that Jesus Christ is the Jehovah so frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, as having made a visible appearance. These passages I will now examine.

John viii. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* This expression *I am*, Mr. Hawker observes, is the incommunicable name of the great Jehovah, and he thinks it probable, that when our saviour distinguished himself by it, he referred to his appearance to Moses, as Jehovah, in the bush. See Ex. iii. 14. But it has already been proved, p. 33, that in the former instance the expression is elliptical, and that it should have been rendered, *Before Abraham was, I am* he, that is, the Messiah.

I Cor. x. 4. *They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.* By this we are to understand nothing more than that the rock, to which Paul alludes, represented Christ. In other words, that there was, according to the apostle's opinion, a resemblance between the rock, which supplied the children of Israel with water in their journey through the wilderness, and Jesus Christ, from whom all the blessings of the gospel may be said to flow to christians.

I Cor. x. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.*
Concerning

Concerning this passage it may be observed, that it is very probable our reading is not the true one, as the Alexandrian manuscript reads *God* instead of *Christ*. With this some later ones agree, or read *LORD*, as do also several of the fathers. Epiphanius says, that the text was early corrupted by Marcion, who changed the ancient reading *Lord* into *Christ*. (x) But allowing that our own reading is just, it does not follow that Jesus Christ was the person whom the children of Israel tempted. The word *God* may be understood after the last clause; and the meaning will be, *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted God, and were destroyed of serpents.*

John xii. 41. *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* "The true meaning is," says Dr. Clarke, "when Esaias (ch. vi. 1.) saw the glory of God the Father revealing to him the coming of Christ, he then saw the glory of him, who was to come in the glory of his Father. Matt. xvi. 27. Esaias, in beholding the glory of God, and in receiving from him a revelation of the coming of Christ, saw, that is, foresaw, the glory of Christ, just as Abraham (John viii. 56) saw, that is, foresaw his day

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(x) Wetstein in loc.

day and was glad. (y) It may also be added, that it is not absolutely certain, the common reading is the true one, as there are three Manuscripts and two versions which read it *the glory of God*, or *the glory of his God.* (z)

John i. 1. *In the beginning was the word, &c.* This passage, I have already attempted to prove, has no reference to the person of Jesus Christ, but to the logos, or wisdom of God, which resided in him.

Matt. xxiii. 37. *O Jerusa'em, Jerusaleem—how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* Dr. Hammond is of opinion, that this passage is explained by our saviour's many earnest exhortations to the Jews to repentance.

The promise of Jehovah, that he would come and dwell with the Jews in the latter day, related not to his personal appearance among them, but to the manifestations he would make of himself to them by Jesus Christ, in consequence of which, God himself might very properly be said to dwell in the midst of them. In the same manner might
Jehovah

(y) Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine, p. 93.

(z) Wetstein and Greifbach in loc.

(a) Dr. Hammond in loc.

Jehovah himself make a new covenant with them, and change their law : for whatever Christ did, it was in consequence of the commission he had received from Jehovah ; so that strictly speaking, it was not Christ that acted, but God that acted by him. This is evident from his own declaration, John vi. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.* The divine immutability, therefore, may still remain unimpeached, and the identity of person may still be preserved in all the dispensations of the Almighty to the children of men, without having recourse to that strange (*b*) hypothesis which Mr. Hawker seems to have adopted.

I will now quote a few passages from the New Testament, which of themselves set all Mr. Hawker's reasoning on this subject aside.

John viii. 54. *Jesus answered—it is MY FATHER that honoureth me, of whom ye say that HE is your God.* This is a direct acknowledgment by our Lord himself, that his Father was the only God of the Jews ; and that the Jews did not consider Jesus in that light, that they had no idea of a second Jehovah—of a God the Son.

Acts

(*b*) I call it a strange hypothesis, because it excludes God the Father from taking any part in the administration of human affairs, and makes him to be nothing more than the silent spectator of his Son's operations.

Acts. iii. 13. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac and of Jacob—hath glorified his son (servant) Jesus.* Here Jesus Christ is plainly distinguished from the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and is called his CHILD or his SERVANT. He could not, therefore, himself have been the God of Abraham, &c. without being the FATHER OF GOD of himself.

Heb. i. 1. 2. *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* The natural conclusion from these words is, that God never spake by his Son, till the dispensation of the gospel. We may infer the same from Heb. ii. 2. 3. *For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord.*

Heb. xiii. 2. *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.* "It has been," says Mr. Peirce, "the common opinion of the ancient christians, as well as it is of the generality of the modern writers upon the scriptures, that in many, or at least in some of the appearances of the angels recorded in the Old Testament, the logos, the Son himself was one of the number, But if the logos was one
one

one of the angels who appeared to Abraham, Lot, or any other of the ancient patriarchs, our author has not made so much of his argument as he then might have done. For it must have been much stronger in case he had said, That thereby some had entertained angels, and not only angels, but the Son of God himself unawares." (c)

I hope enough has now been observed to convince my reader that Jesus Christ was not the person who manifested himself to Adam, Abraham, Moses, and others ; but that this person was no other than that great Being who in the New Testament is so frequently stiled the God of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER

(c) See Peirce on Heb. i. 1. 2. note. His remarks also, in the same note, on Heb. ii. 2. 3, well deserve the attention of Mr. Hawkes, and others who believe that Jesus Christ was the speaker, when the law was given at Mount Sinai. "If," says he, "the Son was the speaker at the giving of the law, which is pretended with as much probability as his speaking on any other occasion, the force of the argument will be lost : for it was easy for the Hebrews to reply, that their law was at first spoken by the Son, as well as the gospel, and therefore there was no reason to infer in the manner this writer does, that the punishment was more to be dreaded in the latter case than in the former."

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Prophecies of the Old Testament which are supposed to prove the Divinity of Jesus.

THE next point Mr. Hawker attempts to establish, is, that there are several passages, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, which prove the divinity of Jesus Christ.

The first he produces is the second Psalm, where Jesus is called *the King of Zion, the Son of God*, and where it is said, his inheritance was to extend to *all the kingdoms of the world.* (d)

Now all this Unitarians acknowledge to be true concerning him. But surely there is nothing in either of the expressions which proves him to be God. Nor do I think, that even Trinitarians will agree with Mr. Hawker, that there is, 'till he has supported his assertion by some kind of proof.

"Similar to this," he says, "in the 89th Psalm, we find the same person predicted under the title of *the Holy One, and one that is mighty*, and declared to

to be God's *first born*, *higher than the kings of the earth.*" It happens, however, that no person is predicted by the Psalmist, under the title *Holy One*. The phrase occurs but twice in the whole Psalm. In the 18th verse it is evidently applied to Jehovah, and in the 19th to the prophet Samuel, (*e*) or more probably Nathan, who received from the Holy One of Israel, in vision, the greater part of the prophecy which follows. See II Sam. vii. 4—17. Or he might intend both, (*f*) part of the prophecy being delivered to Samuel, and part to Nathan.

It should seem, from what has now been observed, that Mr. Hawker has laid much greater stress on the phrase *holy one*, than he ought to have laid on it. It is, I allow, sometimes in the scriptures applied to Jesus Christ, but here we have a striking instance of its being applied to other persons; and therefore nothing can be concluded from it in favour of our Lord's divinity.

It seems also, from comparing this Psalm with
II Sam.

(*e*) Bishop Patrick thus paraphrases the verse, "Who then didst reveal thy mind in a vision to the holy prophet Samuel." See Patrick in loc.

(*f*) The LXX render it *rois voais*; and the old translation of the Psalms has it, *Thou spakest sometime in vision to thy saints.*

II Sam. vii. 4—17, and with the history of David's life, that the Psalm throughout relates to David, nor is there a single expression which Mr. Hawker has produced from it, which will not, with the greatest propriety, apply to him. He is called God's *first born*, for the same reason that Israel is called God's *first born*, Ex. iv. 22, and Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 9. And he was certainly a very mighty prince, much more so than any of the kings his neighbours. The expressions, therefore, if they prove any thing, will prove the divinity of David. At least they will as much prove David to be God, as that Jesus Christ is.

After this Mr. Hawker asserts, that "the children singing songs of triumph before our Lord at his entrance into Jerusalem which the Psalmist predicted (8th Psalm); his persecutions by the princes of the earth (22. 69); the reproaches, and sufferings sustained by his sacred person; the circumstances which attended his crucifixion; the soldiers piercing his side; the parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture: nay, the very words our Lord used in those trying moments, (Ps. 22). All these particulars, and many more to the same purpose, * which we find in the writings of this Prophet, and which are either by our Lord himself

* See 110th Psalm, and compare the 40th with 10th chapter of Hebrews."

himself, or his Apostles, declared to refer to him, clearly imply a superiority of his nature whom they predicted."

"But above all, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, his ascension into heaven, and his possession of an eternal throne, at the right hand of power; these are such predictions as, when explained by the corresponding events, can leave no room to doubt the divinity of that person to whom they referred, and in whom they are accomplished." (g)

Now all this might have been alledged in proof of the divine mission of Jesus Christ, in proof of his being the Messiah; but so far is it from proving the *superiority of his nature, the divinity of his person*, that I think, at first sight, it must appear to every one to prove the contrary. Was it God, I may ask, who was persecuted and reproached? Was it God who suffered and was crucified? Was it God who had his side pierced, and who cried out in the agony of death, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Was it God who died, and was buried? Was it that great Being, who fills with his presence heaven and earth, who ascended up into heaven? Was it God who sat down at his own right hand? If it were not God, who did, and suffered all these things, then surely it
L must

must have been for want of proper thought, that Mr. Hawker has brought forward such strange arguments in proof of the deity of Jesus Christ.

I will now proceed to examine all the other passages, which Mr. Hawker has produced from the prophecies of the Old Testament, in the order in which he has quoted them.

Psalms xlv. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* "And behold," says Mr. Hawker, "the very words quoted by an infallible expositor that cannot be mistaken, and without hesitation applied to him whom he calls *God's eternal Son, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.*"* To this it may be answered, that the words, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, might have been rendered in both places with much greater propriety, *God is thy throne, &c.* And with respect to the assertion, that the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews calls Jesus Christ *God's eternal Son*, I may answer that no such expression is to be found, either in the epistle to the Hebrews, or in any other part of the scriptures. Mr. Hawker, I suppose, must have inferred it from Heb. i. 10. 11; which has been shown, p. 53, to relate not to Jesus Christ, but to HIM who in the preceding verse is called the God of Jesus Christ. And here I cannot help observing how very careful in quoting scripture,

* "Compare Psalm XLV. with Hebrews i."

scripture, persons should be to confine themselves to the real language of scripture. Readers disposed to take opinions upon trust, (and of this description there are always a considerable number,) from the circumstance of the phrase alluded to being printed in italics and connected with other scriptural expressions, would conclude that it made a part of scripture, and afforded decisive proof in favour of the doctrine of the Son's eternal generation from the Father.

Isai. vii. 14. *Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* This passage is applied by the Evangelist Matthew to the birth of our Saviour. Matt. i. 22. 23. But the expression *Emmanuel; God with us*, does not denote that the child who was to be born of Mary was God. It intends only that God would be with us by means of the child; in other words, that by him he would make a peculiar manifestation of himself to his people. Many passages might be brought from scripture to prove that this is the proper meaning of the phrase *God with us.* (h) And that nothing more was meant by it when applied to Christ is evident, because it does not appear to be a name by which he was ever afterwards called.

Isaiah

(h) See II Chron. i. 1.—II Chron. xv. 2.—Ezra i. 3.—
Luke i. 66.

Isaiah ix. 6. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, &c.* This passage admits of a very natural interpretation on unitarian principles. *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.* The prophet refers to Jesus Christ, who was to be given by God, as a benefit to mankind. *And the government shall be upon his shoulders*, that is, the government of the church, of which he was to be appointed by God the governor and the head. *And his name shall be called wonderful*, which may relate to the miracles he was to perform while he was in the world. *Counsellor*, which respects the intimate knowledge he would have of the divine will, and the instructions he would give mankind. *The mighty God*, or more properly, *a mighty God*, a name which may surely be applied to Jesus Christ with as much propriety as it was to Moses, Ex. vii. 1, and angels, Ps. xcvi. 7, and kings, and magistrates, John x. 34. 35. It should also be observed, that the words *mighty God*, may with equal propriety be rendered *mighty, strong*. *The everlasting father*, which Bishop Lowth translates *the father of the everlasting age*, i. e. the founder of the christian dispensation. *The prince of peace*. That this text has no relation to the supposed deity of Jesus Christ, is evident from the last clause of the next verse, where it is added, *the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this*, that is, will make the child who was to be born, *wonderful, counsellor, &c.*

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The reader should be informed also, that it is highly probable the original text is corrupted, as the Vatican copy of the Septuagint wants the expressions *wonderful, counsellor, mighty God*, and reads instead of them, the *messenger of the great design*. See the latter reading supported, with great learning, in a new translation of *Isaiah*, by a Layman, or in the Commentaries and Essays published by the Society for promoting the knowledge of the Scriptures. Vol. i. p. 171, and 243.

Isaiah xl. 3. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Isaiah xl. 9. Say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God. Isaiah xxxv. 4. Behold your God will come and save you. In the language of scripture, God is said to *come* and *visit* his people, when he sends them any extraordinary messenger or deliverer; and it was in this sense that he *came* by Jesus Christ. *Luke vii. 16. And they glorified God, saying that a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people*, that is, by means of the prophet he had raised up. In this respect also might John the baptist, in going before Christ, be said to go before Jehovah; it being by Jesus Christ that Jehovah came and visited his people, and by the authority of Jehovah, that our Lord always acknowledged he acted.

Jer.

Jer. xxiii. 6. *And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness.* Concerning this passage it may be remarked

1. That it is not certain this prophecy relates to Jesus Christ. Many are of opinion, that the prophet intended Zorobabel, who was descended from David, and who ruled the children of Israel when they came out of Babylon.

2. There is good reason to believe that this is not the proper translation; but that the words should have been rendered, *This is the name whereby Jehovah shall call him, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Of this opinion is Dr. Blayney, a learned dignitary of the church of England, who candidly acknowledges, that the divinity of Christ draws its decisive proofs from the New Testament only. (i)

3. We are informed, verse 5th, that it was Jehovah who was to raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king, who was to be so called. It follows, therefore, that he must have been a person different from the Jehovah who raised him up, and inferior to him, being dependant on him for his kingdom.

4. It

(i) See Jeremiah; a new translation, by Benjamin Blayney, B. D. Oxford. 1784.

4. It is evident that the name JEHOVAH, TSID-KENU, if applied to Jesus Christ, has no relation to his nature, because similar names are applied to places. Gen. xxii. 14. *Abraham called the name of that place JEHOVAH-JIREH.* Ex. xvii. 15. *And Moses called the name of the altar JEHOVAH-NISSI.* See also Judges vi. 24; and Ezek. xlviii. 35.

Daniel vii. 13. 14. *And behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, &c.* Mr. Hawker here asks, In what character could the prophet Daniel expect *him* to appear, whom he thus describes? To this it may be answered, certainly not in the character of God almighty; for he is called the *son of man*, and is said to be brought near before the Ancient of days, and to have his dominion, his glory, and his kingdom *given* him; all which, on the supposition he was himself the Ancient of days, was impossible.

Micah v. 2. *But thou Beth-lehem Ephratah, tho' thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* The meaning of this passage is, that his goings forth have been decreed from everlasting. Of this opinion was Calvin. That no proof can be drawn

drawn from it in favour of the deity of Jesus Christ, is evident from v. 4 ; where it is added by the prophet concerning the same person, that *he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD HIS GOD.*

Haggai ii. 9. *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former.* Mr. Hawker says, on account of the divinity of his presence who appeared in it during his incarnation. But we are to attend to the prophets reasons, who says not a word respecting our Lord's divinity. The only reasons assigned by him are, that the desire of all nations was to make his appearance in it, that the Lord would fill the house with glory, and that in it he would give peace.

Zechariah ii. 10. 11. *Sing and rejoice O daughter of Zion : for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people,—and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.* There is no reason to suppose that this passage has any relation to Jesus Christ. It appears from v. 3d and 4th, that it is nothing more than an angel delivering a message, and that he sometimes speaks in his own name, sometimes in the name of Jehovah. It is strange that Mr. Hawker, when he intimates that one LORD was sent

sent by another, should not have perceived how very contradictory the expression was to his own hypothesis. For he thus makes two distinct LORDS, one of whom was superior to the other.

Zechariah xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow.* In answer to what Mr. Hawker has advanced upon this passage, it may be asked, Can a being whom God himself calls *a man*, and *his shepherd*, be *his fellow*, *his equal*? The true rendering is, against the man that is *near to me*, that is *my favourite*. (k)

Malachi iii. i. *Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare my way before me, (and the LORD whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple,) even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold he shall come saith the LORD of hosts.* By the LORD who was to come to his temple, we are to understand Jehovah himself, who came to his temple by Jesus Christ. That this is the true meaning of the passage is evident, because the temple is never called in the New Testament, the temple of Christ; but he himself calls it the *house of God*, the *house of his Father*. Matt. xii. 4. John ii. 16.

I have now examined all the passages which Mr.

M

Hawker

(k) The LXX. render it πολίτης μου, my citizen, and the Syriac version amicum meum, my friend.

Hawker has quoted from the prophecies of the Old Testament, in proof of the superior nature of Jesus Christ, from which I hope it will appear, that neither Dr. Priestley, nor any other Unitarian, is guilty of presumption in asserting, "That none of the prophets, in speaking of the Messiah, gave the Jews any idea of any other than a man like themselves in that illustrious character." We assert it only, because none of the passages which Mr. Hawker has produced, nor any other which he has not produced, appear to us to point him out as any thing more.

CHAPTER VIII.

*Neither the Miracles nor the Discourses of Jesus any
Proofs that he is God.*

THE next subject, which offers itself for consideration, is the evidence Mr. Hawker has brought forward to prove the divinity of our Lord, during his life time on earth,

He begins his sermon, on this subject, with entering into the proofs of our Lord's miraculous conception.

conception. But this, I have before had occasion to observe, is quite foreign to the doctrine of his deity, and is admitted by many Unitarians. I shall therefore now pass it by. (l)

His next proof is taken from our saviour's mighty

(l) I cannot, however, help observing in a note, that Mr. Hawker has used two terms as synonymous, which are really very different, the miraculous conception, and the miraculous incarnation. By the miraculous conception we can understand nothing more, than that the human nature of Jesus Christ, was produced by the immediate power of the Most High, in the womb of the virgin. By the incarnation is meant, that the divine nature, God the Son, became incarnate in the human nature. The arguments he has brought forward may apply to the former, but they afford no proof of the latter. Had Mr. Hawker established the doctrine of the incarnation, it would have been an unequivocal proof, in favour of the unity of natures in the person of Christ, on which he insists p. 164—167. But the miraculous conception affords not the least proof of any such union.

I will also here notice the text Mr. Hawker has quoted from the book of the Revelations, Chap. xxii. ver. 16. *I am the root, and the offspring of David.* By the word *root*, sometimes in the scriptures, is intended a *branch* or *shoot* from a root. See Judges v. 14. Isaiah xi. 1. 10, and liii. 1. And the Greek word *καί*, *and*, may have in this places as it has in many others, the force of an explicative. The following then will be the rendering of the verse, *I am the branch, even the offspring of David.* Vide Grotius in loc; and also on Rev. v. 5.

mighty works, "in all which," says Mr. Hawker, "it appears that he was influenced by his own immediate will and authority." (m) I will produce a few passages from the New Testament, in which our Lord and his apostles assert the contrary, and which set all Mr. Hawker's reasoning on this subject aside. Matt. xii. 28. *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.* See also Luke xi. 20; who has it, *If I with the finger of God, &c.* meaning his power. John v. 19. 21. *The son can do nothing of himself; but what he seeth the Father do. For the Father loveth the son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth: and he will shew him greater works than these.* Ver. 22d. *For the Father hath committed all judgment to the son.* Ver. 26th. *For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the son to have life in himself.* Ver. 30th. *I can of mine own self do nothing.* John ix. 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me.* John x. 25. *The works that I do in my Father's name they bear witness of me.* John xiv. 9—11. *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; (n)*
and

(m) P. 173.

(n) These words are frequently brought as a proof of the deity of Jesus Christ. But if they be taken literally they will prove, not that Jesus Christ is God the Son, but God the Father. The truth however seems to be, that they cannot be taken literally, because the scriptures teach us to con- sider

and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. Acts ii. 22. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Acts x. 38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

From

sider God as invisible. The only way in which God can be seen, is in his works and in his dispensations. Thus we frequently say we see God in the works of creation and providence, and particularly in the dispensation of the gospel. With the greatest propriety therefore might our saviour use this language concerning himself, who was the person chosen by God to introduce the gospel, and who of all other persons resembles God the Father most. See Col. i. 15. and Heb. i. 3. That nothing more was meant by him in this place seems evident from the subsequent verses. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works. As if he had said, "In seeing me thou hast had every manifestation of the supreme Father, which it is possible for thee to have. For thou hast heard the heavenly doctrines which I have taught, and thou hast beheld the mighty works which I have performed, and which, properly speaking, are not my own, but the Father's who dwelleth in me."*

From these passages it is evident, that our saviour never performed any miracles himself, and that his disciples never performed any in his name, in consequence of any natural inherent power of his own, but in consequence of those powers he had received from God. It is to no purpose for Trinitarians to have recourse to the union of natures in the person of Christ, to get rid of this difficulty. For had such an union really existed, the second person in the trinity, with whom it was that the human nature was united, would have been appealed to as the immediate author of the miracles. We find, however, that our saviour uniformly ascribed them, not to the power of *God the Son*, but of *God the Father*.

Mr. Hawker observes, that at the resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus called himself the resurrection and the life, and that in confirmation of the truth of it, he immediately brought a dead man from the grave. Hence, he concludes, that he must have been omnipotent. But it should be remembered, that Christ himself declares, that this power of raising persons from the dead, was given him by the Father. See John v. 26—29.

Great stress also is laid by Mr. Hawker, on our Lord's miracles being sometimes accompanied with the forgiveness of sins, But in answer to this, it may

may be observed, that the same power was given to the disciples, John xx. 23. *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

That by working miracles in the name of Christ, the apostles did not consider the power as derived immediately from him, which Mr. Hawker imagines to have been the case, (o) is evident from their joint prayer to Almighty God, that signs and wonders might be done in the name of his holy child (*servant*) Jesus. Acts iv. 24. 31. "And they (*the apostles*) lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, LORD, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is—grant—that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child (*servant*) Jesus." How, it may be asked, was it possible for them to have expressed, in stronger terms than these, their firm persuasion, that all the miracles they performed, were performed not by the power of *Christ*, but by the power of *the Father* in his name?

Mr. Hawker's next argument is taken from the unparalleled discourses of Jesus Christ. (p) But his reasoning

(o) P. 188—191.

(p) P. 196.

reasoning on this subject is also set aside by the consideration, that our Lord himself frequently declares, he was not the author of his own doctrine; but that he received his doctrine, as well as the power of working miracles, from God. John vii. 16. *Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* John viii. 28. *Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lift up the son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.* John xiv. 24. *And the word which you hear, is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.* So far, therefore, are the truths the blessed Jesus delivered, from being a proof of his deity, that they are a proof of the contrary. For had he been God, he would have spoken immediately from himself; but, on the contrary, we find him declaring, in the most express terms, that whatever doctrines he taught, they were not *his own*, but his *Father's* who *sent* him; a declaration which he never could have made, had he been at the same time himself God.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER IX.

No Divine Attributes given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

THE next argument, says Mr. Hawker, in proof of our blessed Lord's divinity, may be taken from the divine attributes he possessed; (q) the following of which, he is of opinion, are ascribed to him in the New Testament.

1. Omnipresence.

Matt. xviii. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* That this passage does not prove our Lord to be omnipresent, and the object of our prayers, is evident from the preceding verse; where he says, *If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, not of myself, but of my Father which is in heaven.* He then adds, *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* His meaning possibly might be, that whenever his disciples were gathered together to offer up their requests to Almighty God, their prayers would be

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(q) P, 202.

as favourably attended to, as though he himself were personally present with them. Or more probably he might intend, that he would be with them in a figurative sense, by means of those divine powers, which by his prayers he was to procure for them from the Father. This interpretation is confirmed by his own words on another occasion. John xiv. 16—18. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you, that is, I will come to you by means of those powers which I am about to procure for you.*

Grotius has a note on this place deserving attention. "In Latin," he says "he is said to be present with any one who favours and assists him; and that this saying of Christ's is very much like a proverb among the Jews, Where two persons meet together and discourse concerning the law, the shechinah is among them." (r)

John

(r) Latine *adesse alicui dicitur qui ei favet auxiliumque præbet. Est autem hoc Christi dictum simillimum tritæ inter Hebræos sententiæ — Ubi duo confident sermonem habentes de lege, Shechinah est inter ipsos. Grotius in loc.*

John xiv. 23. *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Matt. xxviii. 20. *And lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.* Both these passages may be explained by John xiv. 16---18, above referred to; where Christ represents himself as coming to the disciples, by means of the holy spirit which they were to receive from heaven after his ascension. The last passage ought to have been rendered, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*, which restricts it to the *apostolick age*, as long as miraculous powers were continued in the church.

2. Omniscience.

But none of the passages Mr. Hawker has produced prove our Lord to have been possessed of this attribute. All they prove is, that he had such a knowledge of the hearts and characters of men communicated to him by God, as was necessary to the fulfilment of the ends of his mission. The same kind of knowledge was communicated, at times, to others, though not in so eminent a degree; to Elisha, in the case of Gehazi, and to Peter, in the case of Annanias and Sapphira. That our saviour was not omniscient in the proper sense of the word, is evident from his own declaration, Mark xiii. 32. *But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven,*
neither

neither the Son, but the Father. With respect to our Lord's prescience concerning future events, on which Mr. Hawker lays so much stress, (*s*) it no more proves him to have been possessed of omniscience, than it would prove any other prophet to have been possessed of it. That it was derived in him, as well as in them, is evident from Rev. i. 1. *The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him.* The declaration of Peter, John xxi. 17, *Lord, thou knowest all things,* proves nothing; for the apostle John says the same concerning those to whom he wrote his epistle. I John ii. 20. *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.*

3. Eternity.

(*s*) Trinitarians in general explain this passage by saying, that our Lord did not speak in his divine, but in his human nature. How it is that Mr. Hawker will explain it, considering the concession he has made (p. 177, note,) I am at a loss to conceive. His words are, "For to suppose that our Lord in one passage alludes to his divinity, and in another to his humanity, this would be to make Christ speak and act as two distinct beings; which would be an absurdity. And if this were made the standard for explaining the difficulties of Scripture, to what errors would it lead!" After such a concession, I think I may venture to say, Mr. Hawker is not far from Unitarianism. It may be observed also, that there are many other passages which he will find equally difficult to reconcile, particularly those in which God is declared to be the God of Jesus Christ, which will be noticed in their proper place.

3. Eternity.

Micah v. 2. John i. 1. 2, and John xvii. 5. These passages have already been examined. See p. 87. 38. 28.

Rev. i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* From comparing the different manuscripts, it appears, that the true reading of this verse is, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the LORD GOD, &c.* by whom we are to understand that great Being, who, ver. 1st, is said to have given Jesus Christ the revelation, and who, verse 4th, is called, *He which is, and which was, and which is to come.* (t)

Rev. i. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.* These words are spurious, and ought to be struck out of our english bibles. The true reading is, *I was in the spirit on the Lord's-day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying what thou seest, write in a book.* (t)

4. Immutability.

Heb. xiii. 8. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Concerning this passage it may be

(t) Wettstein and Griesbach in loc.

be observed, that the word *Christ* in the apostolic writings is frequently put for the *gospel of Christ*. Rom. xvi. 7. *Salute Andronicus and Junia who were in Christ before me.* Eph. iv. 20. *Ye have not so learned Christ*, that is, the christian doctrine. See also Eph. iii. 17, II Cor. v. 17, I Thess. iii. 8. The context seems to require the same sense of it here. "Where now" says Dr. Clarke, "is the force of this argument? *Imitate your own pastors, because the person of Christ is always the same.* The context, I think, plainly shows the other to be the true sense: *Adhere to the faith of the apostles who first instructed you, and be not carried about with divers new doctrines; For the doctrine of Christ is always one, and the same, and cannot be changed by men.*" (v)

Heb. i. 10—12. This passage has been before examined. See p. 53.

5. Omnipotence.

"All that Mr. Hawker has advanced to prove that our Lord possesses this attribute, is set aside by his own repeated declarations, that all the powers he possessed, he received from God. Matt. xxviii. 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* See also all the passages quoted in the last chapter, relating to our Lord's miracles.

6. Holiness.

(v) Dr. Clarke's reply to the Objections of Mr. Nelson.

P. 169. 170.

6. Holiness.

Acts xiii. 35. *Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* But this title, I have before had occasion to observe, was given to the prophet Nathan, as it is also to the tribe of Levi. Deut. xxxiii. 8. *And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one.*

Dan. ix. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined—to anoint the most holy,* But that this phrase concludes nothing is evident, because it is applied to things and places in upwards of thirty places in the Old Testament.

CHAPTER X.

None of the incommunicable Names of God given to Jesus Christ either in the Old or New Testament.

MR. Hawker's next argument in favour of the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, is taken from the names and titles by which he says the scriptures distinguish him. (w)

1. Jehovah.

1. Jehovah.

For the most part he observes, "that the word *Jehovah* in the Old Testament, is the same as *Lord* in the New." To this it may be answered, that the Greek word *κυριος*, Lord, is far from being appropriate to the supreme Being. The LXX use it very frequently for master. And in the New Testament it is applied to other persons, as well as to Jesus Christ and to God. Nothing, therefore, can be argued from it, to prove that Jesus Christ is called by the name Jehovah.

Mr. Hawker farther observes upon this subject, that in the Old Testament Jehovah is said to be the only Saviour over all the earth; but that in the New Testament salvation is said to be by Jesus Christ: from this he concludes, that Jesus Christ must be Jehovah. But by the same method of argument it might be proved that Moses was Jehovah: for it is said, Ex. xxxii. 7, that *Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt*, and Ex. xx. 2, that *Jehovah their God, brought them out of Egypt*. The truth is, that God is a Saviour in the highest sense, and that Jesus Christ is a saviour in an inferior sense; being made so by God as others also were. Neh. ix. 27, *Thou gavest them saviours who saved them*. I will produce a few passages from the New Testament to prove, that it is
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in this inferior sense only, that Jesus is a saviour. Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour.* Acts xiii. 23. *Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised up unto Israel a saviour, Jesus.* I John iv. 14. *We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world.*

The passages Mr. Hawker has produced from the Old Testament, to prove that Jesus Christ is distinguished by the name Jehovah, have all been examined in the seventh chapter, except Zech. xii. 10. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.* The apostle John, in quoting this passage, has it, *They shall look on him whom they pierced.* See John xix. 37. We seem therefore warranted in concluding, that there has been some mistake, and that the original reading was *they shall look on him &c.* as John has quoted it. This conjecture is confirmed by what immediately follows in the prophet, *and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him.* It is surely much better for us to have recourse to this interpretation, than to believe the shocking doctrine, that the great Jehovah himself was pierced by his own creatures on a cross.

From what has now been observed, I hope it appears, that the name Jehovah, instead of being
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repeatedly applied to Christ, which Mr. Hawker asserts to be the case, is not applied to him in any one place in the scriptures.

2. God.

Isaiah ix. 6. This passage has already been explained. See p. 84.

Titus ii. 13. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* "Many modern writers" says Dr. Clarke, "understand this whole sentence to belong to one and the same person, viz. Christ: As if the words should have been rendered, *The appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Which construction the words will indeed grammatically bear; as do also those in II Pet. i. 1. But it is much more reasonable, and more agreeable to the whole tenor of scripture, to understand the former part of the words to relate to the Father. The word God, with any high title or epithet annexed, always signifying the Father only."^(w) To this it may be added, that with equal propriety the words may be rendered, *the glorious appearing of the great God, and of our saviour Jesus Christ*, by whom it is that God will judge the world. See Acts xvii. 31, and Romans ii. 16.

Titus

^(w) Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine, p. 77.

Titus i. 3. *According to the commandment of God our Saviour.* But surely something more is requisite to make us believe that the apostle here intended Jesus Christ, than Mr. Hawker's bare assertion. By examining the different passages where the phrase *God our Saviour* occurs, it will be found never to be spoken of *Jesus Christ*, but always of *God the Father*. See particularly, Tit. iii. 4. 5. 6.

Rom. ix. 5, *Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.* "These words" says Mr. Friend of Jesus' College, Cambridge, "are capable of three different meanings. 1. The stop may be placed after *οαγα*, and the meaning will be, *of whom is Christ according to the flesh*. Blessed be God over all for ever. 2. The stop may be placed after *πατρων*, and the words may then be rendered, *of whom is Christ, according to the flesh, who is over all. God be blessed for ever.* 3. The words may be rendered as in our common version."

He adds, "there is another opinion by no means to be despised, though founded on conjecture. The advocates for it read *ωυ ο*, instead of *ο ωυ*, and render the clause thus; *whose are the fathers, of whom is Christ according to the flesh, whose is God over all blessed for ever.*" Of this opinion were Dr. Taylor, and Dr. Whitby. (x) Mr.

(x) See Dr. Taylor in loc; and Dr. Whitby's last Thoughts.

Mr. Clark, of Uxbridge, thus renders the verse. "Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, is Christ; he who is over all is God, blessed for evermore."(*y*)

That the phrase, *as concerning the flesh*, or *according to the flesh*, means nothing more than by *natural descent*, is evident from Rom. iv. 1; and ix. 3.

I Tim. iii. 15. *The church of the living God*, that is, of the *supreme Father*, the title being appropriate to him throughout the Old and New Testament. Mr. Hawker's argument from this passage, in favour of the deity of Jesus Christ, must, I suppose, be the same as his argument from his being called a Saviour, and may be answered in the same way. The church sometimes in the scriptures is called the church of *God*, sometimes the church of *Christ*, because he is by God appointed its head.

I John v. 20. *We are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.* The words may be rendered, *We are in him that is true by or through his son Jesus Christ.*(*z*) *This*
is

(*z*) See this rendering supported in his defence of the Unity of God, in four Letters to the Rev. Mr. Harper. P. 103, 104.

(*z*) The word *even* is not in the original.

is the true God, namely, he that is true, and eternal life. If it be argued, that the last clause of the verse must refer to Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ are the words which immediately precede it, it might be proved by the same argument, from II John, 7th verse, that Jesus Christ was anti-christ. *For many deceivers, says the apostle, are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-christ.*

Jude v. 25. *To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever.* This is a doxology of praise, not to Jesus Christ, but to Almighty God, who is our Saviour in the highest sense. This is put out of all dispute by the consideration that the Alexandrian, Vatican, and Ephrem Manuscripts, and twelve others, with the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic versions, read after God our Saviour, *through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (y) These words, therefore, ought to have a place in our bibles.

To these passages may be added, I Tim. iii. 16. (z) *And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.* On the
supposition

(y) Wetstein and Griesbach in loc.

(z) Noticed by Mr. Hawker, p. 168.

supposition that this is the true reading, the passage proves nothing more than that the perfections of God were displayed in the person of Christ. But there is every reason to suppose, that the word *οὗτος* is not the true reading, as some of the most ancient manuscripts, and all the ancient versions, and likewise the Fathers, read *ος*, or *ο*. instead of it. (a) *The true reading therefore seems to be, Great is the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, justified or confirmed by the spirit, or the miraculous powers bestowed upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; seen of angels, or rather as Mr. Wakefield renders it, "seen by messengers, namely, apostles and preachers of the word, so called here, because our author was looking out for expressions to aggrandize the subject;"* (b) *preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory, or perhaps more properly, received in glory, met with a glorious reception.* (c) This reading

(a) Wetstein and Griesbach in loc. See also Dr. Mills, who says, "No one that I know of all the catholic fathers, who professedly collected all the texts of scripture in proof of Christ's divinity, ever alledged this text before the year 380: Gregory Nyssen first of all." Mill. in loc.

(b) Wakefield in loc. who refers to Acts iv. 20—x. 41. Gal. iv. 14. I John i. 1. Rev. i. 20.

(c) See Dr. Benson in loc. who observes that *αυληφθη* doth frequently signify, *was received*, without denoting any thing of ascending or descending. He particularly refers to Acts xx. 13. xxiii. 31. Eph. vi. 16. II Tim. iv. 11.

ing gives a beautiful sense to the whole passage; but the reading as it stands in our english Testament, seems to give it no sense at all. For how could it be said of God, that he was *justified in the spirit*, or of that great Being, who fills with his presence heaven and earth, that he was *received up into glory*?

3. Lord of glory, Lord of all, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

We cannot, I think, have stronger evidence, that the title, *Lord of glory*, is no proof of our Lord's deity, than the passage Mr. Hawker has himself brought forward. I Cor. ii. 8. *For had they known it, they would not have CRUCIFIED the Lord of glory.* Can Mr. Hawker, or any one else, really believe that Almighty God was crucified? And yet this shocking doctrine must be believed, if we suppose, with Mr. Hawker, that the title, *Lord of glory*, has any relation to our Lord's divine nature!

The other passages are, Acts x. 36. *He (Jesus Christ) is Lord of all.* Rev. xvii. 14. *For he is Lord of lords, and King of kings.* But though our blessed Lord be thus stiled, we are assured in other places, it is only because he is made so by God; which is inconsistent with the idea of his being God himself.

himself. Acts ii. 36. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted to be a prince, &c.* See also Phil. ii. 9—11. Luke xxii. 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* Christians also, in the book of the Revelations, are said to be made *kings and priests unto God.*

4. Alpha and Omega, First and Last.

Rev. xxii. 13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.* But it was surely incumbent on Mr. Hawker, before he brought forward these titles as proofs of the divinity of Christ, to have proved, that they were the incommunicable titles of Jehovah. Till this is done, nothing more can be concluded from them, than from our Lord's being called, *holy, a saviour, a lord, a king, &c.* As the sovereign Creator and disposer of all things, God only is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last; but as the author and finisher of our faith, *Jesus Christ* may, with the greatest propriety, be so styled. And that it is only in this inferior sense these titles are ascribed to him, seems evident, because, in other parts of the book of the revelations, they are connected with such circumstances, as can belong only to a creature.

creature. Rev. i. 17. 18. *I am the-first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead.* Rev. ii. 8. *These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and which is alive.* From these passages it should seem, that by calling himself the first and the last, our blessed Lord meant nothing more than that he was the *last*, on account of his ignominious death, and the *first*, on account of his resurrection from the dead, to die no more.

To the above texts may be added Rev. xxii. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things; and* Rev. xxii. 6. *And the LORD GOD of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.* From comparing these passages, Mr. Hawker concludes, that Jesus Christ is the LORD GOD of the holy prophets. But this argument is set aside by the declaration of the apostle, that God gave Jesus Christ the revelation to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and that Jesus Christ sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John. See Rev. i. 1. The angel, therefore, who was thus employed, was not only the angel of Christ, but the angel of God, in the same manner as a servant, employed by an officer of state, is not only the servant of the officer, but the servant of the king, in whose name and authority the officer acts.

After this, Mr. Hawker asks, (d) "Is not his equal participation of all the perfections of the Godhead what Christ means, when he says to his Father, John xvii. 10, *All mine are thine, and thine are mine.*" The connection however seems to determine, that, in this instance, our Lord is not speaking of *things*, but of *persons*. Ver. 9th—12th. *I pray for them* (the disciples): *I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them, &c.* The only argument which can be alledged against this interpretation, is, that the original words are all in the neuter gender. But to this it may be answered, that in the writings of the New Testament, persons are frequently spoken of in language which properly denotes things. John vi. 37. *All* (literally *every thing*) (e) *that the Father hath given me, will come to me.* Ver. 39, *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all* (literally, *every thing*) *which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* See also I Cor. i. 26—28; where by *things* the apostle Paul evidently means *persons*.

In his last sermon Mr. Hawker farther observes
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(d) P. 219.

(e) The original word is *παν*.

upon this subject, "That there is not an *attribute* or *name*, by which the incommunicable character of the great Jehovah is known in Scripture, but what we find equally applied to our blessed Lord."

(f) I trust, however, it has now been proved, that it does not appear from any thing advanced by Mr. Hawker, that a single *incommunicable* attribute or name of God is ever applied to Jesus Christ in the holy scriptures. And it is certain there are a number of high epithets, not noticed by Mr. Hawker, which are given to God the Father only; such as the Lord of heaven and earth, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the Almighty, the Invisible God, the Living God, &c.

(g) By denying Jesus Christ to be God, we are not, therefore, reduced to the necessity of supposing that the apostles were ignorant of our Lord's real character, as Mr. Hawker imagines. (h) On the contrary, we are of opinion, that if the doctrine of his deity be true, they have shown themselves to have been eminently ignorant of it, as they

(f) P. 331.

(g) For farther satisfaction on this head, I refer my reader to Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine, Chap. i. Sect. 3; in which he has collected the different passages in the Old and New Testament, wherein the Father is stiled God with peculiar high titles, epithets, or attributes. j

(h) P. 220.

they are not only silent upon the subject, but, in almost every page of their writings, assert things in direct contradiction to it.

After having attempted to prove the divinity of our Lord, from the divine attributes and names which are given to him, Mr. Hawker observes, that the following supposition seems to be inevitable, on the presumption that our Lord is not truly divine; "That God himself should suffer a spirit of delusion and error to make its way into the church, instantly on its establishment, and continue its baleful influence through so many ages, from the days of the apostles to the present hour; which," he adds, "is at once the most senseless not to say impious idea that can be conceived." (i) But all this is founded on the supposition that the apostles and early christians were believers in the doctrine of our Lord's deity; a fact which Mr. Hawker has by no means proved to have been the case; and which is not to be admitted without satisfactory evidence. He says indeed, that "the Bishop of St. David's hath very clearly proved, by quotations from the writings of the early Christians, that they did not deny this important article of our faith. And the learned world is certainly very highly indebted to him for refuting the assertions

(i) P. 221.

ions of Dr. Priestley on this head." (k) It would be an easy matter for me to assert the contrary; but I wish not my reader to take any thing upon trust. Whoever desires to satisfy himself on this point, should consult the writings of both these authors. It will be found discussed at large in Dr. Priestley's History of the Corruptions of Christianity, in the Controversy between him and Dr. Horsley, in Dr. Priestley's History of early Opinions concerning Christ, and in his History of the Christian Church. I may refer those who have not time to peruse these large works, to a very small and cheap pamphlet, entitled, A general View of the Arguments for the Unity of God; and against the Divinity and Pre-existence of Christ; from Reason, from the Scriptures, and from History.

I readily allow that the doctrine of our Lord's deity has been professed, for a very long time, by the generality of christians; but this circumstance will no more prove it to be true, than it will prove the absurdities of popery to be true; for the idolatrous worship of saints and images has prevailed among christians near fourteen hundred years, and the deification and worship of a piece of bread near a thousand. Indeed, the same principle, if admitted,

(k) P. 17. note.

admitted, would justify us in concluding from the existence and prevalence of evil, moral and natural, in the world, that our heavenly Father was not just, and wise, and good. The truth seems to be, that in this variety of opinions which the Almighty has suffered to take place, as well as in all his other dispensations, he has some wise and benevolent ends to answer, with which such short sighted creatures as we are, may be totally unacquainted. One end however, and a very important one, we know may be answered by it; it may teach us to be humble in our theological researches, and to exercise candour, forbearance, and christian love, to all our brethren of mankind, from the consideration that we are ourselves fallible alike with them, being equally exposed to prejudice and error, and that there are conscientious men to be found among all denominations of christians. Truly happy must that man be, and peculiarly entitled is he to the name of christian, on whose mind, difference of sentiment on religious subjects has produced these desirable effects.

Mr. Hawker concludes this part of the subject by attempting to account for the Unitarians' rejection of the numerous and diversified evidences by which he imagines the doctrine of our Lord's deity to be supported. "It is not," he says, "to be accounted for on common principles, and one should

A DEFENCE OF UNITARIANISM.

should be almost tempted to apprehend that there must be some latent cause in the mind itself preventing their effect. The pride of human reason, joined, perhaps, to what the apostle emphatically calls *the god of this world, blind the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*" (1) I am far from being disposed to cast reflections upon any man. But I think I may justly say in reply to this insinuation, that if the eyes of any are blinded by the god of this world, they are the eyes of the man whose system of faith is connected with the good things of this world, whose emoluments and dignities depend upon the peculiar articles of his creed, and not of the poor Unitarian. It must be evident to every one, that he has little or nothing to expect from this world; but, on the contrary, that he is obliged to forego all its emoluments and dignities. And this being the case, he must be free from a number of those temptations which might otherwise give an improper bias to his judgment, or which might unfit him for the investigation of truth, or induce him to dissemble it after he had really found it.

(1) P. 221. 222.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Mr. Hawker's Arguments in Proof of the Deity of Christ, from his having taken away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself, from the last Scenes of his History, and from his being appointed by God to raise the Dead and to judge the World.

THE next argument which Mr. Hawker produces in favour of the doctrine of our Lord's divinity is, his having taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (l) But he has brought no argument to prove, that because he has done this he must therefore be God. All he says on this subject is, that "to give efficacy to the oblation he made, it became expedient that he should be holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and in every way untainted with the pollution of that fallen race, whose guilt he suffered to expiate." (m) But this he certainly might be without our supposing his nature to be divine. Indeed, Unitarians themselves, I think, must allow, that it was nothing more than the human nature of Jesus Christ which made the sacrifice, as it was impossible for the divine nature either to suffer or die. What arguments

(l) P. 222.

(m) P. 232.

arguments then can be brought from the doctrine of the atonement, allowing it to be true, (n) to prove that Jesus Christ is God. It seems to me to be the same as attempting to prove his deity from his DEATH.

Besides, in what part either of the Old or New Testament are we informed, that it was necessary there should be an union of natures in the person

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(n) I cannot however help observing in a note, that the doctrine of satisfaction for sin by the death of Christ, does not appear to me to have any foundation in the holy scriptures. The deliverance of mankind from sin, and its consequences, is there uniformly attributed to the free grace of God; and the life, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, are represented as nothing more than the means by which this deliverance was effected; agreeably to what the apostle Paul says Rom. iii. 24. *We are justified freely by his grace, by means of the redemption or deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.* And I think I may venture to affirm, that there is not a single passage in the Old or New Testament, relating to the death of Christ, which will not admit of a fair interpretation on these principles, without having recourse to that most absurd and shocking supposition, that Jesus Christ suffered and died to satisfy the wrath of a revengeful and inexorable Deity. It would have given me pleasure to have entered more at large into this subject, but the nature of this publication will not well admit of it. The reader who wishes for farther information, will find it in Mr. Graham's Letters on the Atonement; or Dr. Priestley's Appeal to the serious and candid Professors of Christianity.

of Christ, to put efficacy into his sufferings? If no such information be given us in the scriptures, and I think I may venture to say there is not, what are we to conclude when we read such passages as the following; *We were reconciled unto God by the DEATH of his son. Christ DIED for our sins according to the scriptures. Christ was DELIVERED for our offences and ROSE AGAIN for our justification. The BLOOD of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, &c?* Knowing that God could not SUFFER, and BLEED, and DIE, and RISE AGAIN, we must conclude that all the important blessings our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us, as christians, he has bestowed upon us, not by means of a GOD, but by means of the MAN Christ Jesus.

Mr. Hawker's next argument is taken from the last scenes of our Lord's history. And here I may notice an observation which occurs in his fifth sermon, (o) because it more properly belongs to this part of the subject. "What awful circumstances," says he, "of a superior nature did our Lord's agony in the garden intimate!" He subjoins in a note, "Christ's agony in the garden so decidedly implies the superiority of our Lord's nature, and some peculiar purpose to be answered by his death, that I think it is capable of bearing much greater stress than is generally laid upon it."

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He continues, "I cannot but conclude, that the horrors which surrounded our Lord in this trying season were of a peculiar kind, and such as no mortal ever sustained." Mr. Hawker here, and in other passages which I have before noticed, argues like a man who really believes the shocking doctrine, that the Blessed God was in agony, that he suffered pain, and was crucified! A doctrine, which, I trust, need only to be mentioned, to convince my reader of its absurdity. He farther adds, "But what must have been that conflict which made it necessary for *an angel to be sent from heaven to strengthen him!*" But it may be asked, is Mr. Hawker seriously of opinion that Almighty God was ever in such circumstances as to stand in need of support from one of his angels? Or if the human nature only of Jesus Christ required support, was not the divine nature capable of affording it, without the assistance of one of his own creatures?

I will now proceed to an examination of the passages which Mr. Hawker quotes as relating to this part of his argument.

John x. 18. *No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; THIS COMMANDMENT HAVE I RECEIVED OF MY FATHER.* The word, which in this place is translated *power*,
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more properly signifies *right* or *authority*; and the word, which is translated *take*, very frequently signifies to *receive*. That they should be so rendered here, is evident from the last clause, which Mr. Hawker has not quoted; and which, had he attended to it, might have convinced him the passage could have no relation to our Lord's deity; but that it was rather a proof of the contrary. The following appears to be the proper translation; *No man taketh my life from me, i. e. against my will, (o) but I lay it down of myself: I am authorised to lay it down, and I am authorised to receive it again. This commandment I have received from my Father.* As to his being authorised to receive his life, it was in virtue of a promise (*p*) which the Father had made him. Such a promise is supposed to be contained in the prophecy of Isaiah, Chap. liii. 10; and is virtually implied in our Lord's own declaration, that *his Father loved him, because he laid down his life that he might receive it again.* In the same manner those who lay down their lives for the sake of Christ, are said to *find*, or to *save* their lives; not surely by any power they had in themselves to restore life after they were dead; but by virtue of a right founded on the gracious promise of our saviour.

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(o) Compare this passage with Matt. xxvi. 53.

(p) Dr. Clarke is of opinion that the word *commandment*, is here used nearly in the same sense, as in Psal. cxxxiii. 3. *The Lord commanded his blessing*; in our old translation *the Lord promised his blessing.* Dr. Clarke's Scrip Doct. p. 139.

See Matt. x. 39. Mark viii. 35. Luke xvii. 33. The word translated *shall preserve* in the last passage, is remarkable, properly signifying *to produce a living creature*. But who would ever suppose, that a person, who should lose his life for the sake of Christ, would of himself be able to restore it again. The meaning obviously is, such a person will so act as to secure eternal life, no less certainly and effectually than if he had a power to confer it upon himself. (q) These observations will also help us to explain our Lord's declaration John ii. 19. *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*. That he did not raise himself from the dead by an act of his own immediate power, is evident from the general tenor of the New Testament, which in all other places refers his resurrection to the power of God the Father. But had he raised himself from the dead by the immediate exercise of his own power, it would most certainly have been attributed, not to the power of *God the Father*, but to the power of *his own divine nature, God the Son*.

John v. 21. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom he will*. Ver. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*.

(q) The substance of the above remarks was communicated to me by a learned and judicious friend. And upon referring to Mr. Wakefield, I find he has adopted the same translation.

self. But here every one must perceive, that Jesus Christ declares, this power which he possessed of communicating life, was given him by God.

Matt. xxviii. 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* This is another certain proof, from his own declaration, that Jesus Christ is not God. For had he been God, *all power* would have been *his own*, and therefore could not have been given unto him.

Matt. xxviii. 19. *Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* It is not however said, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one being, or that each of them is God. Nor does it follow from the form of expression, that our saviour, as Mr. Hawker supposes, placed himself on a level with the supreme Father. One might as well attempt to prove from the following passages, that Moses, and Samuel, and David, and the elect angels were placed on a level with the supreme Father. Ex. xiv. 31. *And the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.* I Sam. xii. 18. *And all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.* I Chron. xxix. 20. *And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their Fathers, and bowed down*

down their heads, and worshipped the LORD and the king. I Tim. v. 21. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things. See also Rev. i. 4. 5.

All that our Lord seems to have meant by this form was, that the disciples should baptize their numerous converts into that religion, which was the gift of God by Jesus Christ, and which was confirmed by the holy spirit, or the miraculous powers bestowed upon them on the day of Pentecost.

Matthew xxviii. 20. *And lo, I am with you alway, &c.* This passage has already been explained. See p. 99.

Mark xvi. 17. *In my name shall they cast out devils, &c.* For the explanation of this verse, see p. 95.

Luke xxiv. 52. *And they worshipped him, that is, did him homage, or reverence. See p. 22. 23.*

Mark xvi. 20. *And they went forth, and preached every where, the LORD working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. By the word LORD in this place we are to understand God the Father. This seems evident from Heb. ii. 3. 4: where we are informed it was God who wrought the*

the signs and wonders, in attestation of the gospel. The words are, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs, and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.*

John xv. 26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* As a proof that the holy spirit was not Christ's own immediate gift, it may be observed that he does not say he will send him from himself, but from the Father. How it is he was to send him from the Father, he explains in another place. See John xiv. 16; where he informs them that the gift of the spirit would be the consequence of his prayers to the Father. It may here be asked, how it is, if Jesus Christ be himself God, he should make use of such language? Why does he speak of sending the spirit from the Father, and not from himself? Or what necessity was there for him to pray to the Father for it, when he himself could have immediately bestowed it upon them?

John xvi. 14. 15. *He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that*

that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. Concerning this passage, it may be observed, that the phrase *all things* is a very indefinite expression. It is said of Christians, I Cor. iii. 21. 22, *All things are yours: whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.* It should seem from the context, that our saviour by this expression meant only all things relating to the christian church, the spirit being said to take of these things, and to shew it unto the disciples. Whatever was intended by it, it is certainly no proof of our Lord's divinity; because whatever things the Son hath, he himself has assured us they were given him by the Father. John iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.*

The last argument on which Mr. Hawker insists, is taken from our Lord's being the illustrious person who is to raise the dead and to judge the world at the last day. (r) "Are these things," he asks, "credible, upon the supposition that Christ is no more after all than an human being? Is the belief of it consistent with the principles of common sense." (s) To this it may be answered, that it is not only consistent with the principles of common sense, but that it is agreeable also to the declarations

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(r) P. 240—246. —(s) P. 241.

tions of the scriptures. John v. 27. *And hath given him (Jesus Christ) authority to execute judgment also, because he is the SON OF MAN.* Acts xvii. 31. *Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that MAN whom he hath ordained.* I Cor. xv. 21. *For since by man came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead.* With such plain passages as these, it is strange Mr. Hawker should have asked the questions he has asked. (t) But I suppose he must have overlooked them, as he has indeed many others.

If any one should ask with Mr. Hawker, how it is that a *glorified man* should be able to raise the dead and to judge the world (u)? It may be answered, that the Almighty Being, who is the author of this all wise and merciful appointment, will also bestow upon him every qualification necessary to the proper and faithful discharge of so important an office.

As Mr. Hawker, throughout his sermons, and especially in this place, says so much respecting the supposed difficulties attending the creed of the Unitarians, he cannot be offended, if I mention a few of the absurdities connected with his own; absurdities which, considering his concession noticed

p. 100

(t) P. 243. (u) P. 242.

p. 100, I know not how he even attempts to reconcile: for if, as he allows, it is absurd to suppose that our Lord, in one passage, alludes to his divinity, and in another, to his humanity, it must be equally absurd to imagine that his apostles have done it.

“Marvellous then and most degrading,” may I say in the words of Mr. Lindsey, “appears to us *Mr. Hawker’s* doctrine concerning the ever blessed, omnipotent, all perfect Creator; and most painful to reflect upon: That HE, the eternal, who was before all things, was born in time of a jewish virgin, 1792* years since, after having lain nine months in the state of an embryo, in the womb of his mother—That HE the source of all wisdom and power, from being a puling, senseless babe, acquired strength and knowledge by degrees—That after having served an apprenticeship to his Father Joseph, at the trade of a carpenter, HE who giveth all things to all, worked at that trade himself for a livelihood (u)—That HE, who filleth the universe with

(u) Our Lord’s own townsmen are mentioned by Mark as saying of him, *Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary?* See Mark vi. 3. And Mr. Lindsey observes, that “Justin Martyr, one of the earliest christian writers, in his dialogue with Trypho, p. 186, speaks of ploughs and yokes for oxen being made by Christ.” Nor is this circumstance at all disparaging to the character of our ever to be admired master. On the contrary, it furnishes us with an additional proof in favour of his great humility.

with his presence, lay concealed for twenty-six years at least, in an obscure town in Judea, and was considered all the time, by all that knew him, as nothing more than a fellow mortal—That HE whom the apostle justly styles, *ο μακαριος*, the happy, I Tim. vi. 15, a being of the most perfect happiness, was subject to hunger and thirst, and pain and suffering; was abused, insulted, and spit upon—And HE, the *living* God, at last put to death by his own creatures. The rest of the incredible story, the enemies of the gospel will dilate upon with pleasure.” (v)

Or in the words of Lord Bacon, the Athanasian, and such I presume is Mr. Hawker, believes “three to be one, and one to be three; a father not to be older than his son; a son to be equal with his father; and one proceeding from both, to be equal to both; he believes three persons in one nature; and two natures in one person. He believes a virgin to be the mother of a son; and that very son of hers to be her maker. He believes him to have been shut up in a narrow cell, whom heaven and earth could not contain. He believes him to have been born in time, who was, and is from everlasting. He believes him to have been a weak child, and carried in arms, who
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(v) Mr. Lindsey's *Vindiciæ Priestleianæ*, p. 286, 287.

is almighty, and him once to have died, who alone has life and immortality." (*w*)

Trinitarians in general attempt to get rid of most of these difficulties, by having recourse to the doctrine of two natures in one and the same person; a doctrine which is in itself absurd and impossible, which is not countenanced by a single passage of scripture, nay, which is contrary to its express declarations; (*x*) a doctrine which makes our blessed Lord, and all his apostles, to be guilty of the most gross equivocation—of equivocation which the advocates for the doctrine would be the first to condemn in another person. It is a doctrine which if a man would believe, he must reconcile his mind to the following glaring contradictions; that Jesus Christ possessed all the incommunicable

(*w*) Bac. Philos. Works, 4to. vol. xi. p. 285.

(*x*) We are informed in the New Testament by Christ himself, that *God gave him the spirit without measure*; and by the apostle Paul, that *in him all the fulness of the Father was pleased to dwell*. But on the supposition that a divine nature, God the Son, became incarnate in the human nature, and was so intimately united with it, as to form but one person, surely this must itself have been sufficient to have answered every purpose relating to our Lord's mission, without any other communications from the Father. As, however, we are assured he did receive these communications, we may be certain he possessed no such divine nature.

nicable names and attributes of deity, and that he did not possess one of them; that he was the Creator of all things, and that he created nothing, but was himself a creature; that he was the Creator and Preserver of heaven and earth, and that he wanted, at the same time, the necessities of life; (y) that he was the object of all religious worship, while he was himself a worshipper; that he was born, and that he was not born; that he died, and did not die; that he was raised from the dead, and that he was not raised from the dead; that he ascended up to heaven, and that he did not ascend up to heaven. He must believe that a person consisted of two parts, one of which was the God of the other; and that one part of a person prayed frequently to his other part; that a person, the part of an indivisible nature, made a whole nature, which was but the part of a person. In fine, it is a doctrine which, if true, will prove that Jesus Christ, though a person, is not mentioned as a person in the scriptures; but only as part of a person, as a mere abstract nature.

This is the famous doctrine which is supposed by

(y) Mr. Markland, a learned Trinitarian, seriously observes, that at the time our blessed Lord miraculously fed the five thousand, "the Creator of the world and his companions, probably were not worth seven pounds sterling altogether." See his note on John vi. 7, in Bowyer's Conjectures.

by Trinitarians to remove all their difficulties. I apprehend it may justly be said of it, that it is attempting to explain absurdities and contradictions by absurdities and contradictions.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Testimony of the Apostles to the Character of their Master.

MR. Hawker observes, that, from the occasional quotations he has made from the New Testament, he has in a great measure proved it to have been the general opinion of the apostles, that our Lord's nature was divine. (z) With what justice he makes the assertion, I now leave my reader to determine. In the seventh sermon he professes to examine more distinctly the particular opinion of each of them.

He begins the sermon with a consideration of their joint testimony, as contained in the declaration of Peter, Matt. xvi. 16. *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!* and intimates that our Saviour's

(z) P. 248.

Saviour's view, in proposing the question which drew from Peter this answer, might be, that their opinion should become the standard and guide to succeeding ages of the church. (a) Happy would it have been had the church made this opinion their standard and guide. Had this been the case, no christian would ever have made him to be the *supreme God*, or a *part of the supreme God*, who acknowledged himself to be only his *Son*.

What is meant by the phrase *Son of God*, when applied to Jesus Christ, I have attempted to show in the third chapter. If Mr. Hawker be of opinion that it means any thing more than is there made of it, that it implies that Jesus Christ is of the same nature with the Father, begotten of him from all eternity, let him produce his passages from scripture in proof of it. Find it he may in the doctrines of the established church, in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds; but I think I may venture to affirm, he will not find it in any passage either of the Old or New Testament.

But, says Mr. Hawker, "If Peter meant nothing more by these words, than that he and his fellow apostles considered Jesus as a *servant*, or a *messenger* from God, surely Christ would not have pronounced him to be blessed for the confession, for multitudes,

(a) P. 249.

multitudes, who knew but little of our Lord's character, more than from seeing the miracles he daily wrought, confessed the same thing." (b) To this it may be answered, that the multitude did indeed confess him to be *a great prophet*; and this was all; but Peter confessed him to be the *Messiah*, the desire of all nations, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, who was to rectify the disorders introduced into the world by sin, and recover mankind by his doctrine to virtue and happiness; and well might our saviour pronounce him blessed, in having so important a discovery made to him.

I cannot dismiss this part of the subject, without taking notice of a singular note which Mr. Hawker has subjoined respecting Mr. Lindsey; (c) and in which he has shown himself most strangely to have misapprehended his meaning. In his second address to the students of the two Universities, Mr. Lindsey renders the greek word *δουλος*, when applied to Jesus Christ, Acts iv. 27, and in other places, *servant*, and not *son* or *child*. His reasons are, that *servant* is one of its common acceptations, and that it is thus rendered by our own translators verse 25th. It is only in two or three instances that the word *δουλος* is applied to Jesus

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Christ,

(b) P. 250. (c) P. 251. 252. note.

Christ, and in these alone, that Mr. Lindsey wishes to make the alteration. And yet Mr. Hawker charges him with wishing to alter the term *son* for that of *servant* in many places, even in places where Christ is called the Son of God, which Mr. Lindsey has no wish to alter. And he adds, "supposing, therefore, in compliance with this writer's wishes, it was adopted in the present instance, the declaration of Peter would be, *Thou art Christ the servant of the living God.*" It is really surprising that Mr. Hawker should not have recollected that in this place the original word is not *pais*, a servant, but *uios*, a son, which no one, who has any knowledge of the Greek language, could have an idea of altering; and I can assure my reader, that Mr. Lindsey is far from having a wish to do it, being of opinion that Jesus has a peculiar claim to the title *Son of God* for reasons already mentioned.

And why should Mr. Hawker object to our Lord's being called the servant of God? The scriptures we find give him this title; (d) and he assumes it not unfrequently himself, by declaring that he was the *messenger* of God, a person whom God had sent.

After having considered the joint testimony of the apostles as contained in the verse following the words of his text, Mr. Hawker professes to examine the particular sentiments of each of them.

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(d) See Isaiah lii. 13. liii 11. xlii, 1. Matt. xii. 18.

He begins with the testimony of John the Baptist, who, he observes, "though not an *apostle* of Christ, yet being his forerunner, may be very properly classed among the servants of our Lord." His testimony is contained in the following passages.

John i. 23. *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.* The parallel passage in Isaiah I have before had occasion to explain. See p. 85. What has been said with respect to the one will hold good with respect to the other.

Matt. iii. 11. *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* "Is it possible," says Mr. Hawker, "that John could have expressed the divinity of Jesus in stronger terms than these?" I leave it to the reader to determine whether he expresses it in any terms. All he says is, that Jesus Christ was *mightier than he*; and that *the latchet of his shoes he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose*. And this language was highly becoming John, even on the supposition that our Lord was simply one of the human race. Jesus Christ was the Messiah, John only the har-
binger of the Messiah; Jesus Christ wrought a num-

ber of miracles in proof of his divine commission, John wrought no miracles; John baptized only with water, Jesus Christ was to baptize with the holy spirit; Jesus Christ was the *master*, the *Lord*, John only the *servant*. It was right therefore that his language should be the language of a servant.

John i. 30. *This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man who is preferred before me: for he was before me.* On the supposition that this is the proper rendering, it cannot surely be pretended, that the passage proves any thing more, than that our Lord pre-existed, which, I have before had occasion to observe, he might have done, without being God. It concludes nothing, therefore, in favour of the point, which it is Mr. Hawker's aim to establish.

Mr. Lindsey's interpretation of the latter clause of the verse appears to be the true one. That it has no relation to a state of pre-existence, which Jesus Christ enjoyed before he was born, seems evident, because John the Baptist is speaking of him as a MAN only. *A MAN cometh after me, who (which MAN) is preferred before me, for he (this MAN) was before me, or greater (c) than I.* This rendering also is confirmed by the parallel passages in the other

(c) The original word *πρωτος* is frequently used in this sense, See particularly Matt. xx. 27.

other evangelists, Matt. iii. 11. Mark i. 7. Luke iii. 16. *There cometh one after me mightier than I.*

But, says Mr. Hawker, "If we are to suppose that the baptist, by all he hath said concerning Christ, intended only to imply that Christ was *greater* as a prophet than he, it next behoves Mr. Lindsey to shew how this is to be reconciled with our Lord's account of John, when he declares, Matt. xi. 11, that *among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.*" (d) To this it may be answered, that our Lord in this declaration must surely have meant to have excepted himself, being most certainly, as well as John, born of a woman, and I should imagine, on trinitarian principles, with respect to his human nature only, much superior to John. That he did except himself, and also others, is evident from the subsequent clause, which Mr. Hawker has not quoted; *nevertheless he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he*; not, says Dr. Whitby, "the meanest christian, but the meanest evangelical prophet or preacher of the christian doctrine is greater than he." (e) If then the meanest prophet in the kingdom of Christ is declared to be greater than John the Baptist, how vastly superior must our Saviour himself have been
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(d) P. 264.note. (e) Dr. Whitby in loc.

who is appointed by God the head of this kingdom!

There seems then to be no reason to conclude from either of the above passages, that John bore any testimony to the deity of Jesus Christ. The most that he declares concerning him is, that he was the *Son of God*, i. e. the *Messiah*, and as such *his chief* and *his Lord*.

From the testimony of John the baptist Mr. Hawker proceeds to that of Peter; and the first instance he produces of Peter's persuasion of our Lord's divinity is, his attempt, at the command of Jesus, to walk upon the water; which he says plainly implied an unbounded confidence in the power of Christ. (f) And this it might imply, but it did not imply a belief that he was God. The true idea he had formed of the miracles of Jesus we may collect from his own declaration on a very important occasion, on the day of Pentecost, when he appears to have been under the immediate inspiration of the holy spirit. Acts ii. 22. *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, not which he did himself, in consequence of any natural, inherent power of his own*

own, but, *which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.* See also a similar testimony, at the time he preached the gospel to Cornelius and his friends, Acts x. 38. I may likewise refer to the account already given of our Lord's miracles in our eighth chapter.

The next instance Mr. Hawker produces as indicating the sentiments of Peter, concerning the person of our saviour, is taken from his transfiguration before him, and James, and John on the mount. (g) But that this transfiguration did not produce any such effect on Peter's mind, as a persuasion of the deity of his master, is evident from his own declaration in his second epistle, in which he informs us, that the glory, in which Christ appeared, was a glory which *he received from the Father.* II. Pet. i. 17. *For he (Jesus Christ) RECEIVED FROM GOD THE FATHER honour and glory, &c.* Their prostration of themselves to the earth does not appear, from the history of this solemn transaction, to have been an act of religious worship paid to Christ, but the effect of the voice which they heard from God. See Matt. xvii. 6.

The next instance is taken from the behaviour of
Peter

(g) P. 270.

Peter at the miraculous draught of fishes, Luke v. 8. *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* But it might in the same manner be proved, that the widow of Zarephath imagined the prophet Elijah to be possessed of a superior nature, for on the death of her son she made use of a similar exclamation, I. Kings xvii. 18. *What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?*

Mr. Hawker conceives that the above passages "afford very strong arguments to the persuasion, that Peter, as well as the other apostles, *occasionally* considered their blessed master under a character very different from that of a mere man." He says, "are we not to look for their *fixed* opinion on the great question of his divinity, until the descent of the Holy Ghost;" after which, he is of opinion, they bear upon every occasion, as far as was consistent with the leading object of their commission, full attestation to the divinity of their master. (h) The following are the passages he has brought forward in proof of this opinion.

Acts ii. 24. *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed*

(h). P. 273—276.

loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. After hinting from these words, as Dr. Horsley has done before him, that our Lord's resurrection was accomplished by a physical necessity, Mr. Hawker adds, "If these terms do not imply the apostle's persuasion of the divine nature of our Lord, I am at a loss to comprehend any meaning in them." (i) Since it is probable that the generality of my readers have not seen Dr. Priestley's reply to Dr. Horsley on this point, I will give it to them at length. "As we read that *it is impossible for God to lie*, it may be said that as God had foretold the resurrection of Christ, it was impossible but that it must take place. As to a proper *natural impossibility*, the fact is clearly against you; for if it had been naturally impossible for him to be holden of death, it must certainly have been naturally impossible for him to have died at all; and if death could hold him *three days*, it might for any thing which appears *in nature*, have held him *for ever*, if the divine power, a power foreign to himself, had not interposed. Accordingly we read, not that he raised himself, but that *God raised him from the dead.* (k) Use, no doubt, will reconcile the minds of

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(i) P. 279.

(k) We are assured of this in the very passage under consideration, and that if the life of Jesus was not left in the grave, and his body did not see corruption, it was because God would not suffer it.

men to strange conceptions of things and strange language; or I should wonder that you should not be shocked at the idea of *God's dying*. For when you speak of the natural impossibility of Christ's being holden of death, you must certainly have an idea of something more than the death of *his body*." (1)

Mr. Hawker continues, "The Apostle, in the conclusion of his sermon, describes the Redeemer under such expressions as carry with them the most satisfactory proofs how strongly impressed his mind must have been with the belief of the superior nature of our Lord." *Therefore* (says he) *let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that GOD HATH MADE that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*" Surely Mr. Hawker's charge against the Unitarians, for asserting things in the face of scripture, (m) may here very fairly be retorted against himself. The apostle Peter says, that if Jesus be *Lord and Christ*, it is because *he is made so by God*; and yet Mr. Hawker observes, "that these expressions carry with them the most satisfactory proofs how strongly his mind must have been impressed with a belief of our Lord's superior nature."

Acts

(1) Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horsley, Part ii. p. 111.

(m) P. 141.

Acts iii. 14. 15. *But ye denied the holy one and the just (more properly that holy and just MAN)—and killed the prince of (more properly guide to) life, whom God hath raised from the dead.* Here, says Mr. Hawker, "Peter names our Lord by such titles as would be the highest impiety, if applied to any created being." If so then I may answer, Peter was guilty of this impiety; for he most certainly has applied them to a created being, even to one who was KILLED, and whom God raised from the dead. Whether Peter is guilty of impiety, or our author in this instance mistaken, I leave to my reader to determine.

From the testimony of Peter, Mr. Hawker proceeds to that of John. The only quotations which in this place he makes from his writings are the following.

Rev. i. 5. 6. *Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* But the ascription of glory and dominion which is here given to Christ, does not imply that he is God: so far from it, that it is given to him as a man, as a person who had washed us from our sins in HIS OWN BLOOD, and made us kings and priests
unto

unto God. Neither will it justify us in offering up religious worship to Jesus Christ, or in addressing ourselves to him in our prayers. It is nothing more than an expression of love, gratitude, and praise, to which he will continue for ever to be most deservedly entitled, on account of the important blessings which he has been the means of securing to us. It may also be added, that it is not certain the present reading is the true one, as one ancient manuscript reads the passage thus; *And from Jesus Christ (who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth) who loved us, &c;* in which case the doxology will belong to God his Father.

Rev. i. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega.* This passage has been already considered. See p. 101.

Rev. i. 17. *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.* Not, as Mr. Hawker imagines, because the apostle supposed him to be God; for he himself declares, ver. 13, that the person he saw was like unto the SON OF MAN. But even on the supposition that John had any idea of the divinity of his master, considering the following repeated assurances which, a little time after, our Lord himself gave him to the contrary, he could

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not but be convinced of his mistake. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of MY GOD, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of MY GOD, and the name of the city of MY GOD, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from MY GOD.* Rev. iii. 12.

It is not then, as Mr. Hawker insinuates, (m) on our side of the question that palpable contradictions must be admitted. It is not the Unitarian who impeaches the veracity of the holy penmen. It is not the Unitarian who brings any heavy accusations against the saviour of the world, for suffering his apostles to make such representations of him, as must infallibly lead into error the faith of mankind. Neither does he, by the system he has espoused, turn the blessing promised in the book of the Revelations, to him that readeth *the words of this book, and keepeth the things which are written therein into a curse.* No, far, very far are we from meriting all this obloquy. It appears to us that ours is the only scheme which makes the scriptures consistent with themselves. We are Unitarians only, because we imagine that our Lord and his apostles were so before us, because our Lord and his apostles uniformly declare, that God

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is one single indivisible person, and that he is as much the God of *Jesus Christ*, as he is of every christian. By bearing our testimony to this most important truth, instead of injuring the religion of Jesus, we are persuaded we are doing it an essential service, that we are vindicating it from absurdities and contradictions, which have long obstructed its progress in the world. I should hope from the candour Mr. Hawker has discovered in other parts of his sermons, that, in his cooler moments, he will be sorry he has cast such reflections upon a set of men, who are equally desirous with himself to promote the cause of divine truth, and who, at least, have taken equal pains to attain to the knowledge of it.

The next testimony which Mr. Hawker considers is that of Thomas, John xx. 28. *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD, and my God!* I will reply to what he has observed upon this passage, in the words of Dr. Whitby. "That it cannot be inferred from these words that Jesus Christ is God, will appear from this consideration, that the faith of St. Thomas, was only this, that Jesus was really risen from the dead. For when the apostles had told him, they had seen the Lord; he answers, *That except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe (it.)* Then Christ coming a second time, faith

saith unto him, *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing, (viz.) that I am risen.* Our saviour then saith, *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed;* which shews that he could believe only what he had seen, to wit, that the same body was raised, which had been crucified; neither had he seen, nor could he see with his bodily eyes, that he who was thus raised, was his Lord and his God. These words therefore, *My Lord, and my God,* may have this import; *My Lord, and my God has done this:* and so they exactly agree with the faith of the apostles, saying, *the God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree,* Acts v. 30. See Acts ii. 24. Acts iii. 15. iv. 10. and xiii. 30. Or thus, *My Lord, and my God!* how great is thy power; for, saith St. Paul, *God exerted the greatness of his power, and the activity of his might, in raising our Lord Jesus from the dead,* Eph. i. 19, 20. But whether this be the true import of St. Thomas's words or no, certain it is, that it cannot be proved, that he did intend by them to signify that he owned Jesus Christ as his Lord and his God, *First,* because he was bred up in the *Jewish* faith, which taught him that the Lord his God, the God of *Israel*, was one Lord, and that there was no other than he: and, *Secondly,* it would have contradicted the faith of Christ himself, who after his resurrection

rection speaks to his disciples thus : *I ascend to my Father and to your Father, and to my God and your God, John xx. 17.*" (n)

With respect to our Lord's miraculous entrance into the room where his disciples were assembled, when the door was shut, I agree with Mr. Hawker, that "it was contrary to all the known properties of physics," as every miracle necessarily must be. Who was the immediate author of this, as well as all the other miracles of Jesus Christ, has been shown in the eighth chapter.

From the testimony of Thomas, Mr. Hawker proceeds to that of Stephen; and in the first place he asks, "What could be the blasphemy against God, with which Stephen was charged, Acts vi. 11, as a learned writer (the Bishop of St. David's) hath very pertinently questioned? What was there in the doctrine of the apostles which could possibly bear this construction, except that of ascribing divinity to our blessed Saviour?" I cannot better reply to this question than in the words of Dr. Priestley. "I might suggest," says he, "that to a Jew, blasphemy against Moses, by whom God spake, would naturally be considered as blasphemy against the God by whom he spake; on the same principle

(n) Dr. Whitby's Last Thoughts, P. 77. 78, 2d. Edition.

principle as our saviour says, Matt. x. 40. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* Besides, we are expressly told what was the *blasphemy* with which Stephen was charged, Acts vi. 11. viz. *against Moses and against God, against this holy place and the law; and this is fully explained as follows, v. 14. For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered us.* This was the whole of the accusation, very clearly stated, and where do you find any thing said concerning the deity of Christ?" (o)

Concerning Stephen's address to Jesus Christ, Acts vii. 59, it may be observed that the word *God* is not in the original. The true rendering is, *they stoned Stephen invoking, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit.* The circumstances of Stephen were peculiar. He had just before been favoured with a sight of his master, sitting at the right hand of God; and it was in consequence of the impression the vision had made upon his mind, that he addressed himself to him. His conduct, therefore, in this instance can be no precedent for us.

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(o) Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horsley, Part ii.

p. 110. 111.

That he did not address himself to him as God, is evident from the following considerations.

1. He himself declares, ver. 52, that of Jesus Christ, whom he calls the *just one*, (which Mr. Hawker stiles the well known character of deity,) the Jews had been the *betrayers* and *murderers*,.

2. He asserts that the person, whom he saw when the heavens were opened, was the SON OF MAN.

3. He affirms that the son of man, the person whom he saw, was *standing at the right hand of God*. If, therefore, we suppose with Mr. Hawker, that Stephen addressed Jesus as God, we must suppose either that Jesus sat at the right hand of himself, or that there are two Gods, one of whom sat at the right hand of the other.

The last testimony which Mr. Hawker considers is that of the apostle Paul, The following are the passages which in this place he produces from his writings.

1 Tim. iii. 16. *God was manifest in the flesh.*
See p. 109. 110.

Col. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the*

the Godhead bodily. That the apostle did not mean by this passage to bear testimony to the deity of Jesus Christ, is evident from his applying similar language to the Christians at Ephesus. *For this cause*, says he, *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.* See Eph. iii. 14—19.

Acts ix. 6. *Lord what wilt thou have me to do ? and the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do.* This address Mr. Hawker mentions as one of the prayers which Paul offered up personally to Christ; “which” he observes, “can upon no consideration whatever be explained, but upon the belief that the apostle had a full persuasion of the deity of our Lord.”^(o) In fact, however, it is nothing more than a question which the apostle proposes to Christ, at the time he was conversing with him in a vision.

II Cor. xii. 8. *For this thing I besought the LORD thrice, that it might depart from me.* The person, to whom Paul here addresses himself, could be no other than God the Father, to whom alone, agreeably to the principles of the Jewish law, and to the instructions and example of Christ, he had always been accustomed to direct his prayers. Mr. Lindsey is of opinion that “the apostle, at this time, had in his thoughts, and imitated our Lord’s prayer

(o) P. 307.

prayer in the garden, the night before his sufferings, when he prayed three times to God, that if it pleased him, the cup of affliction might pass away from him, without his drinking it." He observes also, that Dr. Hammond thus paraphrases the words, "and I earnestly *prayed unto God* to be delivered from it." (*p*) Perhaps the apostle might understand the answer which he received, as referring to the support, the gospel, which was the gift of God by Jesus Christ, (and which in other places, as well as in this, is called *ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ*, the power of God) was calculated to afford him. And therefore he very naturally breaks out into the following exclamation; *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ, i. e. of the gospel of Christ (q) may rest upon me; similar to what he says Phil. iv. 13. I can do all things through Christ, i. e. the gospel of Christ, which strengtheneth me.*

I. Cor. i. 2. *To all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ.* The words may be rendered with greater propriety, *To all that in every place*

(*p*) Mr. Lindsey's Apology, p. 147.

(*q*) It has been already proved, p. 101. 102. that the word *Christ* is frequently used in this sense, in the writings of the apostle Paul. Another instance occurs in the second verse of this chapter.

place are called by the name of *Jesus Christ*, i. e. to all who are christians. The same may be observed of Acts ix. 14. 21.

The apostle's greetings at the beginning of his epistles, and his benedictions at the end of them, are not to be considered as prayers, but only as pious wishes. This is evident from Rev. i. 4. 5. *Grace be to you and peace from him which is and which was and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ.* And I Cor. xvi. 24, after wishing them the favour of the Lord Jesus Christ, the apostle adds, *My love be with you all, in Christ Jesus.*

I have now examined all Mr. Hawker's arguments, and I trust it will appear to the unprejudiced reader, that more than one half of the passages he has produced from scripture, in favour of the doctrine for which he contends, are proofs of the contrary, and that the rest will admit of an easy interpretation, on unitarian principles. That the trinitarian interpretation cannot possibly be the true one, will, I hope, be made fully to appear in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the Arguments from Scripture against the Doctrine of our Lord's Deity.

IN the second chapter of this work, I attempted to establish these three points, that there is but one God, that God is one person, and that this person is the Father. If this be the true doctrine of the holy scriptures, the doctrine of the trinity must be false; (r) there are, there can be no such persons as God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost. But the scriptures furnish us with a variety of other

(r) The only passage in our Testament, which with any plausibility can be urged in favour of the doctrine of the trinity, is 1 John, v. 7. *For there are three that bear record (in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth) the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.* But the words included in the parenthesis are spurious, as has been fully proved by many able writers. Many learned Trinitarians have acknowledged them to be so; and among the rest Griesbach, who has left them out of his edition of the Greek Testament. The reader who wishes for farther satisfaction, will find it in Mr. Emlyn's Enquiry into this text, and in the controversy between Arch-deacon Travis and Mr. Porson.

other arguments equally decisive against the deity of Jesus Christ, the chief of which I will now mention.

1. Jesus Christ is distinguished from God, and is opposed to him throughout the scriptures. Were I to collect all the passages which occur in which this is the case, I should be obliged to quote more than one half of the New Testament. I will content myself with a few. Matt. xvi. 27. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father.* Matt. xx. 23. *To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.* Luke i. 32. *The Lord God shall give unto him (Jesus Christ) the throne of his father.* Luke xxii. 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* John vi. 27. *For him (Jesus Christ) hath God the Father sealed.* John xiv. 31. *As the Father gave me commandment, so I do.* II Cor. iv. 14. *He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus.* I Tim. v. 21. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things.* Heb. xii. 23. 24. *And to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.* In all these passages it is very evident that Jesus Christ is distinguished from God, in the same manner in which
other

other persons are. If, therefore, he himself be God, it will follow, either that he is that very God from whom he is distinguished, which is absurd and impossible; or that there are two distinct Gods, which is a doctrine contrary to the uniform declarations of scripture.

2. Jesus Christ is called *the Son of God, the Son of the living God, the Son of the most high God*. It follows therefore, if he himself be God, either that he is his own father, or that there are two living and most high Gods, one of whom is the Father of the other.

3. Jesus Christ solemnly declares that *his Father is the only true God*. John xvii. 3. *And this* (said he in prayer to his Father,) *is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God*. If, therefore, we say that Jesus Christ is God, we make him to be guilty of a falsehood; for in this case he acknowledged his Father to be the only true God, at the time he himself was the true God, as well as his Father. Jesus Christ therefore is not God according to his own declaration.

4. Jesus Christ, and also his apostles declare that **THE FATHER IS HIS GOD**. The following are the passages in which Jesus Christ asserts it. Matt. xxvii. 46. *MY GOD, MY GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?*

me? John xx. 17. *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to MY GOD and your God.* Rev. iii. 12. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of MY GOD, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of MY GOD, and the name of the city of MY GOD, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down from heaven from MY GOD.* From these passages it follows, if Jesus be God, either that he is his own father, or that there are two different Gods, one of whom is the God of the other. Trinitarians attempt to obviate the difficulty, by saying that in these instances our Lord spake only of his human nature. But to this it may be answered; 1. That the New Testament gives us not the least reason to suppose that the person of our Lord consisted of two natures, but asserts the contrary. 2. Our Lord, in these declarations, makes use of the personal pronouns, and therefore must refer to his whole person. If he meant that God was the God of his human nature only, he would not have said, *I ascend to MY Father and your Father, to MY God and your God*; for in that case, God would not have been HIS God, but the God only of *part of him*. He would rather have said, *Go to the brethren of my human nature, and say unto them, IT ascends to ITS Father and your Father, to ITS God and your God.* But allowing that the person of Christ did

consist of two natures, and that in these instances he referred only to his human nature, it will even then follow, that Jesus was his own God, that he consisted of two parts, one of which was the God of the other, and that one part of a person ascended up to heaven to his other part.

The following are the passages in which the apostles call *the Father*, the God of *Jesus Christ*. II Cor. xi. 31. *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.* Eph. i. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* See also Rom. xv. 6, II Cor. i. 3, Rev. i. 6; which may be so rendered. Eph. i. 16. 17. *I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom.* I Peter, i. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* See also Heb. i. 9. Trinitarians attempt to explain these passages in the same manner that they explain the preceding ones, by saying that the apostles speak only of our Lord's human nature. This supposition, however, does not appear at all to help them. The apostles expressly assert, that God is the God of *Jesus Christ*; but if he be the God of his human nature only, he is not the God of *Jesus Christ*, but the God only of part of him.

him. That Jesus Christ is mentioned in all these places as a person, is as evident as that Abraham is mentioned as a person, in those places where God is called the God of Abraham. God therefore must be the God of his whole person.

5. Our Lord himself, and also his apostles, refer his existence, his miracles, his doctrine, and all his powers to God, as their author. John vi. 57. *As the living Father hath sent me, and I LIVE BY THE FATHER.* II Cor. xiii. 4. *For though he (Jesus Christ) was crucified through weakness, HE LIVETH BY THE POWER OF GOD.* Matt. xxviii. 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* John iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into his hands.* One would imagine that if our Lord were really possessed of two natures, and that he ever spake in his divine nature only, it would be in those passages where he is emphatically stiled THE SON; and yet as THE SON all things are here said to be GIVEN into his hands. John v. 30. *I can of mine own self do nothing.* John xi. 22, Martha says to Jesus, *I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.* John xii. 49. *For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak.* John xvii. 7. *Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me*

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are of thee. Acts x. 38. God anointed *Jesus of Nazareth with the holy ghost and with power*. Eph. i. 22. *And (God) hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church*. Heb. i. 2. *Whom he (God) hath appointed heir of all things*. Rev. i. 1. *The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him*. These are a few only of the passages in which our Lord is declared to be dependent upon God his Father, for his existence and all his powers. It is, I think, impossible for any man, who pays a proper attention to them, to avoid the conclusion that Jesus Christ is not God; for if he be, he himself and also his apostles, would not, as is uniformly the case, have referred every thing he taught, and did, and possessed, to God the Father, as its author; but to his own divine nature, which Trinitarians call *God the Son*, a phrase, however, which is not once to be met with in the scriptures,

6. Jesus Christ is stiled *the servant of God*, is declared to be *sent by him*, and is called *his gift*. Isai. xlii. 1. *Behold my servant whom I uphold; which prophecy is applied by Matthew to Jesus Christ*. See Matt. xii. 18. Isai. lii. 13. *Behold my servant shall deal prudently*. Isai. liii. 11. *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many*.

See

See also Acts iii. 13. &c; where the greek word *δoulos* may be rendered *servant*, instead of *child* or *son*. John iii. 16. God gave *his only begotten Son*, &c. John iv. 10. *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it was that said unto thee give me to drink.* John v. 23. *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.* I John iv. 14. *And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* It may here be asked was God the servant of himself? Did God send himself? Was God the gift of himself? And yet it seems impossible to avoid these conclusions, if we say that Jesus Christ is God.

7. Jesus Christ, and also his apostles declare, in the most express terms, that his Father is superior to him. John x. 29. *My Father which gave them me is greater than all.* John xiv. 28. *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I.* (s) I Cor. iii.

(s) Mr. Hawker professes to be of opinion, that in this passage, "our blessed Lord meant exactly as the words express; and that there is a precedence in the Father, such as the priority earthly parents may be supposed to possess, tho' at the same time the most perfect equality of nature remains." But then it will necessarily follow, that there are two distinct Gods, one of whom had the precedence of the other. That these two Gods should make but one God, is something more than

iii. 23. *Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's.* I Cor. xi. 3. *THE HEAD of Christ is GOD.* I Cor. xv. 27. 28. *But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that HE is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto HIM that put all things under him, that GOD may be all in all.* Such plain passages as these require

than what Mr. Hawker calls an *inexplicable mystery*; it is in its very nature a downright contradiction. As to Mr. Hawker's assertion that the passage "is wholly unaccountable on the unitarian principles of Christ's being but a mere man," it may be answered, not more so than his declaration, John x. 29. *My Father which is in heaven is greater than all.* If our Lord did not trifle with words, in saying that his Father was greater than *others*, neither can he be charged with trifling with words, for saying that his Father was greater than *himself*. It appears to me, that our Lord's real intention in making this declaration, was to comfort his disciples with the assurance that the power of his Father would be exerted in support of christianity, in a much greater degree, after he had left them, than it had been before; agreeably to what he had said John xiv. 12. *He that believeth on me the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father.* This was a good reason for their rejoicing, instead of grieving at the idea of his departure. Nor could they testify their love of him better, than by rejoicing, because by these means they would prove that they had a real concern for the important cause in which he was engaged; and the success of which had proved itself, of all other things, to be nearest to his heart.

quire no comment. The doctrine of our Lord's deity could not well be contradicted in stronger terms.

8. Jesus Christ informed his disciples, that after his ascension, they were not to offer up to him any of their petitions. John xvi. 23. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing, but whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you.* Hitherto he had been present with his disciples, and they had had recourse to him for assistance and instruction, as one friend has recourse to another able to assist him. Thus perceiving that he was enabled by the power of God to perform miracles, they awoke him at the time they were in danger of being shipwrecked, saying, *Lord save us or we perish.* See Matt. viii. 25. But now he acquaints them, that after he was taken from them, they were not to apply to him for any thing, but to offer up all their petitions to the Father *in his name, or as his disciples.*

9. Jesus Christ himself prayed to God. I will mention a few of the most striking instances. Luke vi. 12. *And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* Luke xxii. 41. 44. *And he kneeled down and prayed, and there appeared an angel to him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in*

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an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, referring to this affecting scene, says, that in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, he was heard in that he feared. (t) Can we really suppose that the person who is represented as praying so frequently, and so earnestly, was himself God, and the object of prayer. Or if, as Trinitarians say, it was only the human nature of Jesus Christ which prayed, was not his own divine nature capable of affording him all the support he needed, without having recourse to the Father; especially without receiving assistance from one of his own angels? Besides, how even on these principles can the conclusion be avoided, that in all the instances which are recorded of his praying to God, he absolutely prayed to himself?

10. Jesus Christ assured his disciples that he was not possessed of the attribute of omniscience; for he declared to them that he was ignorant of the day of judgment, Mark xiii. 32. *But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.* It is a poor subterfuge to which Trinitarians have recourse, when they say that our Lord knew it in his divine

* See Heb. 5. 7.

divine nature and not in his human ; for this is to make the same person to know a thing and not to know it, at the same time, which is absolutely impossible. The creed of St. Athanasius, as it is commonly called, speaking of this union of natures in the same person, has these words ; “ For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.” Now let us suppose that any man was to assert that he did not know a thing, at the time he actually did know it, meaning that he did not know it with respect to his body, but only with respect to his reasonable soul ; would not every one charge him with having uttered a most gross falsehood ? And yet he might say this with as much truth as our saviour, on the supposition he was God, could assert that he was ignorant of the day of judgment. But as we do not, as we cannot suppose that Jesus Christ was ever guilty of falsehood or equivocation, this single passage only should be sufficient to convince us that he cannot be God.

11. All the honour and happiness which Jesus enjoys in heaven, is declared to be given him by God. Acts iii. 13. *The God of our Fathers hath glorified his Son (servant) Jesus.* Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour.* Eph. i. 19—21. *According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in*
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Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come. Phil. ii. 9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Lastly, we are informed, that Jesus Christ is to raise the dead, and to judge the world at the last day, only in consequence of God's appointment; which is another certain proof that he himself is not God. John v. 26. 27. *The Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man. Acts x. 42. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.*

With arguments such as these does the New Testament abound in every part. What other conclusion can be drawn from them than this, that Jesus Christ is not God, as the generality of christians so long have ignorantly supposed him to be; but a being distinct from God, and inferior to him, his Son, his messenger, his servant, and dependent

pendent upon him, in common with all other created beings, for his existence, his power, and all that honour and happiness to which he is now exalted?

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the Evidence which points out Jesus Christ to have been simply One of the Human Race.

THE generality of the passages, which the advocates for the doctrine of our Lord's pre-existence bring from the New Testament in its favour, I have had occasion to examine in the fourth chapter. I will now present the reader with a concise view of the evidence by which the contrary opinion is supported, viz. that our Lord had no existence before he was born; but that he was intirely one of the human race, differing from other men in no other respects, but in those divine communications, which it pleased God to impart to him.

1. The prophecies of the Old Testament, relating to the Messiah, uniformly speak of him as a man, Gen. iii. 15, He is called *the seed of the wo-*

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man, a phrase evidently synonymous to *man*. Gen. xxii. 18, he is promised to Abraham, as one of his descendants. *In thy seed shalt all the nations of the earth be blessed.* Deut. xviii. 15. 18, Moses describes him to the Israelites, as a prophet, who was to be one of **THEIR OWN BRETHREN**, and a *man like unto him*. *The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me.* Psalm cxxxii. 11, David had a promise that the Messiah should be of his family: *The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it. Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne;* which prophecy, by the apostle Peter, is directly applied to Christ, Acts ii. 30. *Knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, i. e. by natural descent, (1) he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne.* Isaiah ix. 5, He is predicted by the prophet, as a child that was to be born, as a son that was to be given. Isaiah liii, He is described as **A MAN** throughout. Zech. xiii. 7, he is called **THE MAN** who is God's favourite. See also Zech. vi. 12. In general, it may be observed, that the prophets, in speaking of him, make use of such language, as is evidently characteristic of a man, and

(1) P. 103.

and of nothing more. (u) It is natural therefore to suppose, that they never considered him in any other than this light.

2. The Jews, in consequence of the uniform predictions of the Old Testament, never expected their Messiah to be any thing more than a man. John vii. 42, we find them saying, *Hath not the scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?* and John iv. 29, the woman of Samaria seems to express that it was the general belief, that the Messiah would be one of the human race; *Come see a man who told me all that ever I did: Is not this the Christ?* Had the expectations of the Jews been different, we should have been able to have collected as much from the writings of the New Testament. Considering how much they prided themselves on their being the peculiar favourites of heaven, nothing, perhaps, would have gratified their vanity more, than the idea of a Messiah of heavenly origin. But notwithstanding all the high ideas they had formed of him, as a prince and mighty conqueror, the idea that he was God, or the maker of the world under God, or a being who

(u) For the examination of those passages in the prophecies of the Old Testament, which may seem to represent him in a higher light. See the sixth chapter.

who pre-existed, does not appear once to have entered any of their minds.

3. If we read the history of Jesus, we find it to be the history of *a man*. He was born into the world as other men are. He acquired strength and knowledge by degrees; for it is said of him, Luke ii. 52, that *he increased in wisdom and stature*; a circumstance which seems impossible to account for, on the supposition that he was either God, or a pre-existent angelic being, who made all things. He possessed also all the feelings and affections of a man; he was joyful and sorrowful, he was hungry and thirsty, he suffered pain and died. It may also be observed, that his temptation, his agony in the garden, his exclamation on the cross, and indeed all the scenes of his life, are much better accounted for, on the supposition of his being a *man* only.

4. Our Lord speaks of himself uniformly as *a man*. John viii. 40. *But now ye seek to kill me, A MAN that hath told you the truth.* John xv. 24. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.* John xv. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this, that A MAN lay down his life for his friend.* John xviii. 37. *To this end was I BORN, that I might bear witness to the truth.*

truth. John xx. 17, He calls his disciples **HIS BRETHREN**, and assures them that the same Almighty being was their common God and Father. *Go to MY BRETHREN, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.* It may also be observed, that **SON OF MAN** is the title by which he almost always distinguishes himself. Matt. xvi. 13. *Whom do men say that I the SON OF MAN am?* John iii. 13. *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but the SON OF MAN who came down from heaven, &c.*

5. Jesus Christ was considered by his acquaintance as *a man*, during the whole of his life time. John i. 30, the baptist speaks of him as *a man*. *After me cometh A MAN, who is preferred before me, for he was greater (v) than I.* Matt. viii. 27. *What manner of A MAN is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?* Matt. xxvi. 74. *I know not THE MAN.* Agreeably to this idea, we find that his disciples treated him in every respect as *a man like themselves*, considering him only as their teacher and master. Various were the questions they proposed to him, some of them from motives of curiosity, others for the purpose of information; but never do we find them proposing a single question to him, respecting a state of pre-existence which he enjoyed before he was born; a circumstance which, considering the inquisitive turn of mind,

mind, on all occasions, they discovered, cannot be accounted for, if they ever imagined him, in any of his discourses, to refer to such a state. The Jews, it is true, frequently pretended to understand him as laying claim to a divine nature; but surely nothing can be argued from the false construction they were always disposed to put upon his words. Let a single instance be produced, wherein it can be shown, that his disciples understood him as referring to a state of pre-existence; and that Jesus Christ meant they should so understand him, and then we shall be disposed to give up the question. No such instances ever yet have been produced.

6. The apostles, after the ascension of Jesus, continue uniformly to speak of him as *a man*. We are informed, Acts ii, that on the day of Pentecost, ten days after our Lord's ascension, the disciples were assembled together with one accord, and in one place, that the holy spirit was miraculously bestowed upon them, and that Peter, in the name of his fellow apostles, delivered a discourse to the people, on the nature and evidence of the christian faith. It is natural to suppose that, in such circumstances, and upon such an occasion, being the first discourse which was ever publicly delivered, he would instruct them in every important article of christianity, especially in every thing relating

relating to the nature and dignity of his beloved master. Had he, at the time, known him to have been God, or a pre-existent being, the maker of the world under God, he would not have neglected to have informed his hearers of it, and to have laid a stress upon these articles, proportionable to their importance. Not a syllable, however, does he utter respecting either of these doctrines. On the contrary, he declares, in the most positive terms, that Jesus was A MAN, that he was *approved of God by miracles, which God did by him*, that he was *crucified and buried*, that *God raised him from the dead*, and *made him Lord and Christ*. Similar to this were all the other discourses of Peter. See Acts iii. 12—26. iv. 23—30. v. 29—32. x. 34—43.

Stephen, in the vision with which he was favoured, declared that the *person* he saw *standing at the right hand of God*, was the SON OF MAN, See Acts vii. 56.

The apostle Paul, at Antioch in Pisidia, taught the same doctrine concerning Jesus, which Peter had taught, and nothing more. He declared to his hearers, that Jesus was *the Messiah, a descendant of David*, that the Jews *crucified him*, and that *God raised him from the dead*; and he concludes this part of his discourse with these remarkable words, *Be*

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it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this MAN is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. See Acts xiii. 23—38. When at Athens, he preached in the same manner, declaring that God had appointed a day, in which he would judge the world in righteousness by A MAN whom he had ordained, whereof he had given assurance to all men in that he raised him from the dead. See Acts xviii. 31. The same testimony he bears concerning him in his epistles. Rom. v. 15. Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one MAN Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. I Cor. xv. 21. For as by man (more properly a man) came death, by A MAN also is come the resurrection of the dead. Gal. iv. 4. God sent forth his Son MADE OF A WOMAN. I Tim. iv. 5. There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, THE MAN Christ Jesus. Heb. ii. 9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, i. e. who was A MAN, (v) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. Heb. ii. 14. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of (more properly was a partaker of) the same, i. e. was A MAN, as the children also are. Ver. 16. 17. For verily he, took not on him the nature of (more properly helped not) angels; but he helped the seed of Abraham, wherefore it behoved him in all things

(v) Compare this verse with ver. 7th, and Psalm viii. 5.

things to be made like (more properly it was right for him in all things to be like) unto HIS BRETHREN. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

7. Jesus Christ, on the supposition he was a pre-existent being, was not a man. For if he pre-existed he must either,

1. Have been a man only in *appearance*. In this case, however, it is evident he was not *really* a man, but an angelic, or super-angelic being in disguise. He could not, therefore, with any propriety, have been called a man. Or,

2. This angelic, or super-angelic being must have been the soul of Jesus Christ. But then he could not have been a man; for he would have wanted a human soul. Nor would his works have been the works of a man, but the works of the pre-existent being which animated his body. This, however, is contrary to the express declaration of Peter, that *he was A MAN approved of God by miracles*. Or,

3. There must have been two distinct beings, a man and an angel, so united as to form but one being; which is absurd and impossible. But even allowing that these two beings were so united, as to form but one being, this being could not be called
a man

a man. In fact, he would be neither man, nor angel, but being compounded of both, he would be of a nature essentially different from either. You might give him any other name you pleased; but you could not call him a man.

The following quotation from Dr. Priestley will perhaps place the argument in a more forcible point of view. "I would recommend it," he says, "to the consideration of my readers, how the apostles could continue to call Christ *a man*, as they always do, both in the book of Acts, and in their epistles, after they had discovered him to be either God, or a super-angelic being, the maker of the world under God. After this, it must have been highly degrading, unnatural, and improper, notwithstanding his appearance in *human form*. Custom will reconcile us to strange conceptions of things, and very uncouth modes of speech; but let us take up the matter *ab initio*, and put ourselves in the place of the apostles and first disciples of Christ."

"They certainly saw and conversed with him at first on the supposition of his being a man as much as themselves. Of this there can be no doubt. Their surprize, therefore, upon being informed that he was not a man, but really God, or even the maker of the world under God, would be just as great as ours would now be on discovering that
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any of our acquaintance, or at least a very good man and a prophet, was in reality God, or the maker of the world. Let us consider then, how we should feel, how we should behave towards such a person, and how we should speak of him afterwards. No one, I am confident, would ever call any person *a man*, after he was convinced he was either *God*, or an angel. He would always speak of him in a manner suitable to his proper rank."

"Suppose that any two men of our acquaintance, should appear, on examination, to be the angels Michael and Gabriel; should we ever after this call them *men*? Certainly not. We should naturally say to our friends "those two persons whom "we took to be men, are not men, but angels "in disguise." This language would be natural. Had Christ, therefore, been any thing more than man before he came into the world, and especially had he been either God, or the maker of the world, he never could have been, or have been considered as being, a man, while he was in it; for he could not divest himself of his superior and proper nature. However *disguised*, he would always in fact have been whatever he had been before, and would have been so *stiled* by all who truly knew him."

"Least of all would Christ have been considered as a man in *reasoning*, and *argumentation*, though his external appearance should have so far put men off their guard, as to have led them to give him that appellation. Had the apostle Paul considered Christ as being any thing more than a man, with respect to his *nature*, he could never have urged with the least propriety or effect, that, *as by man came death, so by man came also the resurrection of the dead*. For it might have been unanswerably replied, This is not the case; for indeed, by *man* comes death, but not by man, but by *God*, or the *creator of man*, under God, comes the resurrection of the dead." (w)

8. All the honour and happiness which our Lord enjoys in heaven, is represented in the New Testament, as subsequent to his death and resurrection; which is totally repugnant to the idea that he possessed that prior state of dignity which the advocates for his deity and pre-existence suppose. Thus the apostle Paul informs us, that it was not till God raised Jesus from the dead, that *he set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named*. See Eph. i. 20—22. How, may it be asked, is this, and similar

(w) Dr. Priestley's History of early Opinions, Vol. 1.

p. 17—19.

milar declarations, to be reconciled with the idea, that he was possessed of this authority and dominion before, either as God, or as a great pre-existent being, the creator of the world under God?

For all these reasons do we believe Jesus to have been a man, and a man only. But we do not, on this account, think less highly of his character: Nor do we suppose that, on this account, he is less worthy our gratitude and love. No; we still consider him as the chosen messenger of God to mankind, as invested by him with the highest qualifications, and the most extraordinary powers, as the wisest and best of created beings, as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. We love him as our brother and friend. We honour him as our master and Lord. We revere him as the man appointed by God to be our judge. As our God, or as our Creator, we cannot consider him; we dare not worship him; for he himself, and all his apostles, have given us the most positive assurances that he is not. But next to God his Father we love and honour him most.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XV.

Of the Importance of Christianity upon Unitarian Principles.

IT seems to have been an object with Mr. Hawker throughout his sermons, and particularly in the last, to interest the passions of his readers, in embracing and maintaining that system which he has taken upon himself to defend, by representing it as a system more honourable to God and to Christ, and more conducive to the virtue and happiness of mankind. Unitarianism, according to him, makes christianity to be of little or no importance. I will quote a few of the most striking passages; and the remarks, which I shall make upon them, will perhaps be found to apply to the rest.

“I have already,” he says, “more than once observed, and now finally wish to leave the full force of the observation upon your minds, that, together with the divinity of our blessed master, must stand or fall, all the peculiar and momentous doctrines of his gospel. Every thing interesting in christianity is founded on the greatness of its author’s

thor's character. Even the moral precepts of his religion lose much of their dignity, and their authority is debased, if the founder be no more than man." (*w*) He observes also, "that the higher ideas we entertain of the great author of our faith, the higher must arise in proportion, the duty and obedience we owe to him." He continues, "Let those professors of christianity, who consider Jesus but as a *man*, regard, but as the ministry of a *man*, all the interesting doctrines of his religion. For the whole of his gospel being enervated by this persuasion, they cannot, they ought not, indeed, to feel it in the manner it should affect us." (*x*)

To all this it may be answered, that the doctrines and precepts of christianity, whatever Mr. Hawker may have said to the contrary, actually do appear to Unitarians in a light equally as important, as though they believed Jesus to be God. For they most firmly believe that he was a messenger sent from God, and that all the doctrines and precepts his religion contains, came from God; since, properly speaking, it was not he that spake, but as the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews informs us, *God who spake by him, confirming the word by*

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signs(*w*) P. 240.—(*x*) P. 249.

signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the holy spirit. (y)

Let us suppose that mankind were now uncertain with respect to a future state, and that Almighty God, by means of a messenger, whom he had raised up for the purpose, were to assure us, there would be such a state; should we think it a matter of any consequence, of what order of beings this messenger was? Certainly not. We should be anxious only to know that he really was a messenger from God. Were we convinced of this, our belief would be as firm, on the supposition he was only a man, as it would be were he an angel, or, as Trinitarians suppose, God himself; and being equally firm, it would be equally influential. This mode of reasoning will hold good not only with respect to a future state, but with respect to all the doctrines and precepts of christianity.

Mr. Hawker farther observes, "If this be the real state of things, and the christian's Lord be not divine, farewell to all the hopes of the faithful, his consolations are no more." (z) He adds "Considering the miserable consequence to which the rejection of our Lord's divine nature necessarily leads,

(y) See Heb. i. 1. and ii. 3.

(z) P. 340.

leads, and the despondency it creates in the human mind, one should imagine that the advocates for the doctrine, however secretly convinced that they are right, must yet wish to be wrong: For surely it is the most comfortless doctrine ever proposed to mankind." (a)

It may here be asked, what reason Mr. Hawker has for saying that the rejection of the doctrine of our Lord's deity, creates despondency in the human mind? Did he ever himself feel that despondency which he asserts the disbelief of it necessarily occasions? If not, whence did he derive his information? Were the question to be proposed to any Unitarian, whether his views of God and of Christ made him melancholy, whether he wished that the system he had espoused might in the end prove a false one? he would be quite astonished, and would reply, that he was as happy in his belief as he could possibly wish to be. I hope therefore I shall not be thought harsh in saying, that this despondency which, according to Mr. Hawker, is the necessary consequence of Unitarianism, exists only in his own idea, and that the unfavourable light in which he has exhibited the unitarian doctrine, is calculated only to excite undue prejudices in the minds of his readers against it.

The importance of religion, and of every doctrine

rine of religion, must be judged of by its tendency to promote the virtue and the happiness of mankind. If therefore the christian religion can be proved to have this tendency, as much upon the unitarian system, as it has upon any other, every thing which Mr. Hawker has observed in order to make it appear in an uninteresting light, will fall to the ground.

In the first place, christianity is as much calculated upon unitarian principles, as upon any other to make men virtuous. For it contains all those doctrines which are calculated to influence the conduct; the being and attributes of God, the divine mission of Jesus Christ, the necessity of repentance and amendment, to secure the divine favour and approbation, and the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments. These, as must be apparent to every one, are the only doctrines which are the foundation of christian virtue; and I will take upon me to say, that the man who acts up to them, will be found to be as virtuous a character as trinitarianism could ever boast.

2. Christianity is as much calculated upon unitarian principles, as upon any other, to promote the cheerfulness and the happiness of mankind.

We are creatures incapable of providing for
ourselves,

ourselves, we are dependent upon God for all we are, and for all we have. But do the divine nature and attributes afford less reason for joy because they are possessed only by one single undivided person? Is not one person of infinite knowledge, of unlimited power, of perfect benevolence, fully adequate to the supply of all our wants? Surely we may be as happy in the persuasion that one such person exists, as we should be were we persuaded there were a thousand.

We have all sinned against our Maker, and we stand in need of mercy. This mercy God has graciously promised, by Jesus Christ, freely to bestow. Has he not an undoubted right to bestow it in whatever manner he pleases? and should it be the less acceptable to us because it proceeds immediately from himself? On the contrary, have we not more abundant reason to rejoice in our Creator's goodness, have we not more abundant reason for the exercise of gratitude, love, praise, and every other cheerful and devout affection, than we should have, if we considered him as of himself making no allowance for the natural imperfections of his creatures, but determined to punish them for ever, for weaknesses which they could not avoid, till another person turned away his wrath by offering full satisfaction in their stead?

One great design of christianity is to make men virtuous; and to assist us in our endeavour after holiness, the example of Jesus Christ is proposed throughout the New Testament, as a model for our imitation. Is this example less animating because it is the example of a *man*, of a person who was actually in the same situation and circumstances with ourselves? On the contrary, is not the idea of his being of the same nature that we are, much more likely to encourage us in our attempts *to walk even as he walked*?

Our religion teaches us to believe that we shall live again in another world, that the trumpet shall sound, and that the dead shall be raised. As a proof that this important event will take place, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God. Is our belief in the doctrine of the resurrection less firm, because the resurrection of Jesus was the resurrection of a *man*? On the contrary, have we not, on this account, much stronger evidence, that because he lives, we, who are of the same nature that he was, and who shall undergo the same change by death that he did, shall live also?

The consequence of this resurrection will be a general judgment. "We must all" says the apostle Paul, "appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that

that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Is there any thing distressing in the idea, that our judge is to be one of the human race? Rather is it not calculated to inspire us with confidence and joy? For we may in this case say of our judge, what the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews says of our high priest, "We have not a judge who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who was in all respects tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

In fine, when we reflect upon the whole system of christianity; when we consider that it is a scheme in every respect honourable to God, and conducive to the virtue and happiness of men; when we consider farther that Jesus Christ was the messenger chosen by God to introduce it, that he attested the truth of it with his blood, and that he has thus been the means of delivering men from their iniquity and of course from their guilt, we are confident that we can cry out with a degree of holy transport, equal to that of the Trinitarian, "Thanks be to God for his UNSPEAKABLE GIFT?"

Mr. Hawker, if he would prove that unitarianism leads to those dismal consequences to which he says it leads, should prove that the lives of those who profess it are less virtuous than the lives
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of Trinitarians, and their deaths less resigned and happy ; but this I apprehend is not in his power. He asserts, indeed, that "if experience can be deemed the truest test for the ascertaining a matter of fact, we have reason to conclude that those leave the world with most complacency and satisfaction, who have learnt to place their confidence in a *saviour's merit* and not in *their own*." (a) Here, however, he has afforded us another proof of his ignorance of our principles. We readily acknowledge that we do not depend for our acceptance with God, upon the merit of Jesus Christ ; for what can the most virtuous of creatures merit for another at the hands of his Maker ? But it does not, therefore, follow that we depend upon our own. No ; we depend, as the scriptures teach us, upon a more sure foundation than either, our heavenly Father's mercy, declared to mankind by Jesus Christ our Lord, mercy which, we know, will make allowance for all the natural imperfections of human nature, and which is fully adequate to the pardon of all our sins.

I may observe, before I conclude, that in one respect, at least, the unitarian system has greatly the advantage of the contrary one. It is this ; that there is nothing in it to puzzle and perplex the mind, that it is a system perfectly rational and simple, that in it involves in itself no absurdities or contradictions,

contradictions, that it is founded on the obvious meaning of the uniform declarations of scripture, and that it is a system which the most illiterate persons may easily understand and explain. The trinitarian system, on the contrary, is irrational and unintelligible, replete with absurdity and contradiction, founded on the most abstruse explanations of a few passages of scripture detached from their connection, and a system which its ablest advocates have never been able to define, or even to understand.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Hawker calls the unitarian doctrine "the fashionable doctrine of the present hour," and he adds, "when it has had its day, like many others which have sprung up, and for the moment appeared to flourish, but soon died away, whose memorial is perished with them, this also will sink and be forgotten." (d) And if it be merely the doctrine of the present day, and not the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, Unitarians can console themselves with the same idea. If it be not a plant of our heavenly Father's planting, we are not so much attached to it as a system, as not to hope and pray that it may be rooted up. Being however

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firmly

firmly persuaded that it is a plant of his planting, we are confident that every attempt, which is made to exterminate it, will only cause it to strike still deeper root. Our confidence is not a little strengthened by the consideration, that every controversy to which it has given rise, has encreased the number of its advocates; and this circumstance seems to justify the persuasion, that its progress will continue to be accelerated till at length it shall become the religion of the world, when as the Prophet predicts, "JEHOVAH shall be King over all the earth, and there shall be ONE JEHOVAH, and his name ONE. (c)

(c) Zech, xiv, 9.

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